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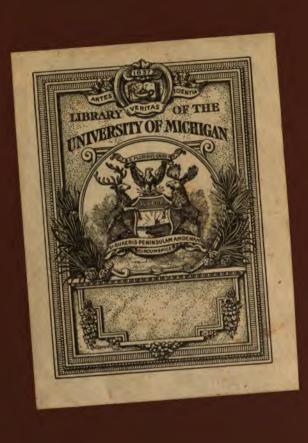
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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.



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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.



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FEB. & MARCH 1826.

DIARY.

"Edinburgh, February 10. — Went through, for a new day, the task of buttoning, which seems to me somehow to fill up more of my morning than usual — not, certainly, that such is the case, but that my mind attends to the process, having so little left to hope or fear. The half hour between waking and rising has all my life proved propitious to any task which was exercising my invention. When I got over any knotty difficulty in a story, or have had in former times to fill up a pas-

sage in a poem, it was always when I first opened my eyes that the desired ideas thronged upon me. This is so much the case, that I am in the habit of relying upon it, and saying to myself, when I am at a loss, 'Never mind; we shall have it at seven o'clock to-morrow morning.' If I have forgot a circumstance, or a name, or a copy of verses, it is the same thing. I think the first hour of the morning is also favourable to the bodily strength. Among other feats, when I was a young man, I was able at times to lift a smith's anvil with one hand, by what is called the horn - that projecting piece of iron on which things are beaten to turn them round. But I could only do this before breakfast. It required my full strength, undiminished by the least exertion, and those who choose to try will find the feat no easy one. This morning I had some new ideas respecting Woodstock, which will make the story better. The devil of a difficulty is, that one puzzles the skein in order to excite curiosity, and then cannot disentangle it for the satisfaction of the prying fiend they have raised. — I have a prettily expressed letter of condolence from Sir James Mackintosh.* Yesterday I had an anecdote from old Sir

* This letter is so honourable to the writer, as well as to Sir Walter, that I am tempted to insert it in a note: —

" To Sir W. Scott, Bart., Edinburgh.

" Cadogan Place, Feb. 7, 1826.

"My Dear Sir, — Having been sailing on Windermere when Lord Gifford passed the Lakes, and almost constantly confined since my return to town, I did not hear till two days ago of your very kind message, which, if I had received it in the north, I should probably have answered in person. I do not know that I should now have troubled you with written thanks for what is so natural to you as an act of courtesy and hospitality, if I were not in hopes that you might consider it as excuse enough for an indulgence of inclination which might otherwise be thought intrusive.

"No man living has given pleasure to so many persons as you have done, and you must be assured that great multitudes who never saw you, in every quarter of the world, will regret the slightest disturbance of your convenience. But, as I have observed that the express dec-



James Steuart Denham,* which is worth writing down. His uncle, Lord Elcho, was, as is well known, engaged in the affair of 1745. He was dissatisfied with the conduct of matters from beginning to end. But after the left wing of the Highlanders was repulsed and broken at Culloden, Elcho rode up to the Chevalier and told him all was lost, and that nothing remained except to charge at the head of two thousand men, who were still unbroken, and either turn the fate of the day, or die sword in hand, as became his pretensions. The Chevalier gave him some evasive answer, and turning his horse's head, rode off the field. Lord Elcho called after him (I write his very words), 'There you go for a damned cowardly Italian!' and never laration of one individual sometimes makes more impression than the strongest assurance of the sentiments of multitudes. I venture to say that I most sincerely lament that any untoward circumstances should. even for a time, interrupt the indulgence of your taste and your liberal enjoyments. I am sorry that Scotland should, for a moment, lose the very peculiar distinction of having the honours of the country done to visiters by the person at the head of our literature. Above all, I am sorry that a fortune earned by genius, and expended so generously, should be for the shortest time shaken by the general calamities.

"Those dispositions of yours which most quicken the fellow-feelings of others will best console you. I have heard with delight that your composure and cheerfulness have already comforted those who are most affectionately interested in you. What I heard of your happy temper in this way reminded me of Warburton's fine character of Bayle—'He had a soul superior to the attacks of fortune, and a heart practised to the best philosophy.' You have expended your fortune too well not to be consoled for a temporary suspension of its produce; you have your genius, your fame, and, what is better than either, your kind and cheerful nature.

"I trust so much to your good-natured indulgence, that I hope you will pardon me for joining my sincere but very humble voice to the admiration and sympathy of Europe. — I am, my dear Sir, yours most truly,

J. MACKINTOSH."

* General Sir James Steuart Denham of Coltness, Baronet, Colonel of the Scots Greys. His father, the celebrated political economist, took part in the Rebellion of 1745, and was long afterwards an exile. The reader is no doubt acquainted with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Letters, addressed to him and his wife Lady Frances. [Sir James died at Cheltenham in August 1839, aged 95.]



would see him again, though he lost his property and remained an exile in the cause. Lord Elcho left two copies of his memoirs, one with Sir James Steuart's family, one with Lord This is better evidence than the romance of Chevalier Johnstone; and I have little doubt it is true. Yet it is no proof of the Prince's cowardice, though it shows him to have been no John of Gaunt. Princes are constantly surrounded with people who hold up their own life and safety to them as by far the most important stake in any contest; and this is a doctrine in which conviction is easily received. Such an eminent person finds everybody's advice, save here and there that of a desperate Elcho, recommend obedience to the natural instinct of self-preservation, which very often men of inferior situations find it difficult to combat, when all the world are crying to them to get on and be damned, instead of encouraging them to run away. At Prestonpans the Chevalier offered to lead the van, and he was with the second line, which, during that brief affair, followed the first very close. Johnstone's own account, carefully read, brings him within a pistol-shot of the first line. At the same time, Charles Edward had not a head or heart for great things, notwithstanding his daring adventure; and the Irish officers, by whom he was guided, were poor creatures. Lord George Murray was the soul of the undertaking.*

"February 11. — Court sat till half-past one. A man, calling himself * * * * of * * * * *, writes to me, expressing sympathy for my misfortunes, and offering me half the profits of what, if I understand him right, is a patent medicine, to which I suppose he expects me to stand trumpeter. He endeavours to get over my objections to accepting his liberality

^{*&}quot; Had Prince Charles slept during the whole of the expedition," says the Chevalier Johnstone, "and allowed Lord George Murray to act for him according to his own judgment, there is every reason for supposing he would have found the crown of Great Britain on his head when he awoke." — Memoirs of the Rebellion of 1745, &c. London, 1810. 4to. p. 140.



(supposing me to entertain them) by assuring me his conduct is founded on 'a sage selfishness!' This is diverting enough. I suppose the Commissioners of Police will next send me a letter of condolence, begging my acceptance of a broom, a shovel, and a scavenger's great-coat, and assuring me that they had appointed me to all the emoluments of a well-frequented crossing. It would be doing more than they have done of late for the cleanliness of the streets, which, witness my shoes, are in a piteous pickle. I thanked the selfish sage with due decorum - for what purpose can anger serve? I remember once before, a mad woman, from about Alnwick. by name * * * *, baited me with letters and plans - first for charity for herself or some protegé - I gave my guinea then she wanted to have half the profits of a novel which I was to publish under my name and auspices. She sent me the manuscript, and a moving tale it was, for some of the scenes lay in the Cabinet à l'eau. I declined the partnership. Lastly, my fair correspondent insisted I was a lover of speculation. and would be much profited by going shares in a patent medicine which she had invented for the benefit of little babes. I dreaded to have anything to do with such a Herod-like affair, and begged to decline the honour of her correspondence in future. I should have thought the thing a quiz but that the novel was real and substantial. Sir Alexander Don called. and we had a good laugh together.

"February 12.— Having ended the second volume of Woodstock last night, I had to begin the third this morning. Now I have not the slightest idea how the story is to be wound up to a catastrophe. I am just in the same case as I used to be when I lost myself in former days in some country to which I was a stranger. I always pushed for the pleasantest route, and either found or made it the nearest. It is the same in writing. I never could lay down a plan—or, having laid it down, I never could adhere to it; the action of composition always extended some passages, and abridged or omitted others; and personages were rendered important or

insignificant, not according to their agency in the original conception of the piece, but according to the success, or otherwise, with which I was able to bring them out. I only tried to make that which I was actually writing diverting and interesting, leaving the rest to fate. I have been often amused with the critics distinguishing some passages as particularly laboured, when the pen passed over the whole as fast as it could move, and the eye never again saw them, except in proof. Verse I write twice, and sometimes three times over. This hab nab at a venture is a perilous style, I grant, but I cannot help it. When I strain my mind to ideas which are purely imaginative - for argument is a different thing - it seems to me that the sun leaves the landscape - that I think away the whole vivacity of my original conception, and that the results are cold, tame, and spiritless. It is the difference between a written oration and one bursting from the unpremeditated exertions of the speaker, which have always something the air of enthusiasm and inspiration. I would not have young authors imitate my carelessness, however.

"Read a few pages of Will D'Avenant, who was fond of having it supposed that Shakspeare intrigued with his mother. I think the pretension can only be treated as Phaeton was, according to Fielding's farce—

> 'Besides, by all the village boys I'm shamed: You the sun's son, you rascal?—you be damn'd!'

Egad — I'll put that into Woodstock. It might come well from the old admirer of Shakspeare. Then Fielding's lines were not written. What then?—it is an anachronism for some sly rogue to detect. Besides, it is easy to swear they were written, and that Fielding adopted them from tradition.*

"February 13. — The Institution for the encouragement of the Fine Arts opens to-day with a handsome entertainment in the Exhibition-room, as at Somerset House. It strikes me that the direction given by amateurs and professors to their

^{*} See the couplet, and the apology, in Woodstock, chap. xxv.

protegés and pupils, who aspire to be artists, is upon a pedantic and false principle. All the fine arts have it for their highest and most legitimate end and purpose, to affect the human passions, or smooth and alleviate, for a time, the near unquiet feelings of the mind - to excite wonder, or terror, or pleasure, or emotion of some kind or other. It often happens that, in the very rise and origin of these arts, as in the instance of Homer, the principal object is obtained in a degree not equalled by any successor. But there is a degree of execution, which, in more refined times, the poet or musician begins to study, which gives a value of its own to their productions, of a different kind from the rude strength of their predecessors. Poetry becomes complicated in its rules - music learned in its cadences and harmonies - rhetoric subtle in its periods. There is more given to the labour of executing less attained by the effect produced. Still the nobler and popular end of these arts is not forgotten; and if we have some productions too learned — too récherchés for public feeling — we have, every now and then, music that electrifies a whole assembly, eloquence which shakes the forum, and poetry which carries men up to the third heaven. But in painting it is different; it is all become a mystery, the secret of which is lodged in a few connoisseurs, whose object is not to praise the works of such painters as produce effect on mankind at large. but to class them according to their proficiency in the inferior rules of the art, which, though most necessary to be taught and learned, should vet only be considered as the Gradus ad Parnassum, the steps by which the higher and ultimate object of a great popular effect is to be attained. They have all embraced the very style of criticism which induced Michael Angelo to call some Pope a poor creature, when, turning his attention from the general effect of a noble statue, his Holiness began to criticise the hem of the robe. This seems tome the cause of the decay of this delightful art, especially in history, its noblest branch. As I speak to myself, I may say that a painting should, to be excellent, have something to say to the mind of a man, like myself, well educated, and sus-

ceptible of those feelings which anything strongly recalling natural emotion is likely to inspire. But how seldom do I see anything that moves me much! Wilkie, the far more than Teniers of Scotland, certainly gave many new ideas. So does Will Allan, though overwhelmed with their remarks about colouring and grouping, against which they are not willing to place his general and original merits. Landseer's dogs were the most magnificent things I ever saw - leaping, and bounding, and grinning on the canvass. Leslie has great powers; and the scenes from Molière by Newton are excellent. Yet painting wants a regenerator - some one who will sweep the cobwebs out of his head before he takes the pallet, as Chantrey has done in the sister art. At present we are painting pictures from the ancients, as authors in the days of Louis Quatorze wrote epic poems according to the recipe of Dacier and Co. The poor reader or spectator has no remedy; the compositions are secundum artem; and if he does not like them, he is no judge, that's all.

"February 14. — I had a call from Glengarry vesterday, as kind and friendly as usual.* This gentleman is a kind of Quixote in our age, having retained, in their full extent, the whole feelings of clanship and chieftainship, elsewhere so long abandoned. He seems to have lived a century too late, and to exist, in a state of complete law and order, like a Glengarry of old, whose will was law to his sept. Warm-hearted, generous, friendly, he is beloved by those who know him, and his efforts are unceasing to show kindness to those of his clan who are disposed fully to admit his pretensions. To dispute them, is to incur his resentment, which has sometimes broken out in acts of violence which have brought him into collision with the law. To me he is a treasure, as being full of information as to the history of his own clan, and the manners and customs of the Highlanders in general. Strong, active, and muscular, he follows the chase of the deer for days and nights to-

^{*} Colonel Ranaldson Macdonell of Glengarry. He died in January 1828.

gether, sleeping in his plaid when darkness overtakes him. The number of his singular exploits would fill a volume; for, as his pretensions are high, and not always willingly vielded to, he is every now and then giving rise to some rumour. He is, on many of these occasions, as much sinned against as sinning; for men, knowing his temper, sometimes provoke him, conscious that Glengarry, from his character for violence, will always be put in the wrong by the public. I have seen him behave in a very manly manner when thus tempted. He has of late prosecuted a quarrel, ridiculous enough in the present day, to have himself admitted and recognised as Chief of the whole Clan Ranald, or surname of Macdonald. The truth seems to be, that the present Clanranald is not descended from a legitimate chieftain of the tribe; for, having accomplished a revolution in the 16th century, they adopted a Tanist, or Captain, that is, a Chief not in the direct line of sucession - namely, a certain Ian Moidart, or John of Moidart, who took the title of Captain of Clanranald, with all the powers of Chief; and even Glengarry's ancestor recognised them as chiefs de facto, if not de jure. The fact is, that this elective power was, in cases of insanity, imbecility, or the like, exercised by the Celtic tribes; and though Ian Moidart was no chief by birth, yet by election he became so, and transmitted his power to his descendant, as would King William III., if he had had any. So it is absurd to set up the jus sanquinis now, which Glengarry's ancestors did not, or could not, make good, when it was a right worth combating for. - I wrought out my full task yesterday.

"Saw Cadell as I returned from the Court. He seemed dejected, and gloomy about the extent of stock of novels, &c. on hand. He infected me with his want of spirits, and I almost wish my wife had not asked Mr. Scrope and Charles K. Sharpe for this day. But the former sent such loads of game that Lady Scott's gratitude became ungovernable.* I have

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^{*} I transcribe a letter from Sir Walter, on an occasion of this sort, from the first chapter of Mr. Scrope's Art of Deer-Stalking:

not seen a creature at dinner since the direful 17th of January, except my own family and Mr. Laidlaw. The love of solitude increases by indulgence; I hope it will not diverge into misanthropy. It does not mend the matter that this is the first day that a ticket for sale is on my house, poor No. 39. One gets accustomed even to stone walls, and the place suited me very well. All our furniture, too, is to go—a hundred little articles that seemed to me connected with all the happier years of my life. It is a sorry business. But sursum corda.

"My two friends came as expected, also Missie, and staid till half-past ten. Promised Sharpe the set of Piranesi's views in the dining-parlour. They belonged to my uncle, so I do not like to sell them.

"February 15. — Yesterday I did not write a line of Woodstock. Partly, I was a little out of spirits, though that would not have hindered. Partly, I wanted to wait for some new ideas — a sort of collecting of straw to make bricks of. Partly, I was a little too far beyond the press. I cannot pull well in long traces, when the draught is too far behind me. I love to have the press thumping, clattering, and banging in my rear; it creates the necessity which almost always makes me work best. Needs must when the devil drives — and drive he does even according to the letter. I must work to-day, however. — Attended a meeting of the Faculty about our new library. I spoke — saying that I hoped we would now at length act upon

"Thanks, dear sir, for your venison, for finer or fatter Never roam'd in a forest, or smoked in a platter."

"Your superb haunch arrived in excellent time to feast a new married couple, the Douglasses of M——, and was pronounced by far the finest that could by possibility have been seen in Teviotdale since Chevy Chase. I did not venture on the carving, being warned both by your hints, and the example of old Robert Sinclair, who used to say that he had thirty friends during a fortnight's residence at Harrowgate, and lost them all in the carving of one haunch of venison; so I put Lockhart on the duty, and, as the haunch was too large to require strict economy, he hacked and hewed it well enough."

a general plan, and look forward to commencing upon such a scale as might secure us at least for a century against the petty and partial management, which we have hitherto thought sufficient, of fitting up one room after another. Disconnected and distant, these have been costing large sums of money from time to time, all now thrown away. We are now to have space enough for a very large range of buildings, which we may execute in a simple taste, leaving Government to ornament them if they shall think proper - otherwise to be plain. modest, and handsome, and capable of being executed by degrees, and in such portions as convenience may admit of .-Poor James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, came to advise with me about his affairs, - he is sinking under the times; having no assistance to give him, my advice, I fear, will be of little service. I am sorry for him if that would help him, especially as, by his own account, a couple of hundred pounds would .carry him on.

"February 16. - 'Misfortune's growling bark' * comes louder and louder. By assigning my whole property to trustees for behoof of creditors, with two works in progress and nigh publication, and with all my future literary labours, I conceived I was bringing into the field a large fund of payment, which could not exist without my exertions, and that thus far I was entitled to a corresponding degree of indulgence. I therefore supposed, on selling this house, and various other property, and on receiving the price of Woodstock and Napoleon, that they would give me leisure to make other exertions, and be content with the rents of Abbotsford, without attempting a sale. This would have been the more reasonable, as the very printing of these works must amount to a large sum, of which they will touch the profits. In the course of this delay I supposed I was to have the chance of getting some insight both into Constable's affairs and those of Hurst and Robinson. Nav. employing these houses, under precautions, to sell the works, the publisher's profit would have come in to pay part of their

^{*} Burns's Dedication to Gavin Hamilton.



debt. But Gibson last night came in after dinner, and gave me to understand that the Bank of Scotland see this in a different point of view, and consider my contribution of the produce of past, present, and future labours, as compensated in full by their accepting of the trust-deed, instead of pursuing the mode of sequestration, and placing me in the Gazette. They therefore expect the trustees to commence a lawsuit to reduce the marriage-settlement which settles the estate upon Walter; thus loading me with a most expensive suit, and I suppose selling library and whatever else they can lay hold on.

"Now this seems unequal measure, and would besides of itself totally destroy any power of fancy - of genius, if it deserves the name, which may remain to me. A man cannot write in the House of Correction; and this species of peine forte et dure which is threatened would render it impossible for one to help himself or others. So I told Gibson I had my mind made up as far back as the 24th of January, not to suffer myself to be harder pressed than law would press me. If this great commercial company, through whose hands I have directed so many thousands, think they are right in taking every advantage and giving none, it must be my care to see that they take none but what the law gives them. If they take the sword of the law. I must lay hold of the shield. If they are determined to consider me as an irretrievable bankrupt, they have no title to object to my settling upon the usual terms which the Statute requires. They probably are of opinion, that I will be ashamed to do this by applying publicly for a sequestration. Now, my feelings are different. I am ashamed to owe debts I cannot pay; but I am not ashamed of being classed with those to whose rank I belong. The disgrace is in being an actual bankrupt, not in being made a legal one. I had like to have been too hasty in this matter. I must have a clear understanding that I am to be benefited or indulged in some way, if I bring in two such funds as those works in progress, worth certainly from £10,000 to £15,000.

"February 17. — Slept sound, for nature repays herself for the vexation the mind sometimes gives her. This morning put interlocutors on several Sheriff-court processes from Selkirkshire. Gibson came to-night to say that he had spoken at full length with Alexander Monypenny, proposed as trustee on the part of the Bank of Scotland, and found him decidedly in favour of the most moderate measures, and taking burden on himself that the Bank would proceed with such lenity as might enable me to have some time and opportunity to clear these affairs out. I repose trust in Mr. M. entirely. His father, Colonel Monypenny, was my early friend, kind and bospitable to me when I was a mere boy. He had much of old General Withers about him, as expressed in Pope's epitaph —

'--- A worth in youth approved, A soft humanity in age beloved!'

His son David, and a younger brother, Frank, a soldier, who perished by drowning on a boating party from Gibraltar, were my schoolfellows; and with the survivor, now Lord Pitmilly, I have always kept up a friendly intercourse. Of this gentleman, on whom my fortunes are to depend, I know little. He was Colin Mackenzie's partner in business while my friend pursued it, and he speaks highly of him: that's a great deal. He is secretary to the Pitt Club, and we have had all our lives the habit idem sentire de republica: that's much too. Lastly, he is a man of perfect honour and reputation; and I have nothing to ask which such a man would not either grant or convince me was unreasonable. I have, to be sure, something of a constitutional and hereditary obstinacy; but it is in me a dormant quality. Convince my understanding, and I am perfectly docile; stir my passions by coldness or affronts, and the devil would not drive me from my purpose. Let me record, I have striven against this besetting sin. When I was a boy, and on foot expeditions, as we had many, no creature could be so indifferent which way our course was directed, and I acquiesced in what any one proposed; but if I was once driven to make a choice, and felt piqued in honour to maintain

my proposition, I have broken off from the whole party, rather than yield to any one. Time has sobered this pertinacity of mind; but it still exists, and I must be on my guard against it. It is the same with me in politics. In general I care very little about the matter, and from year's end to year's end have scarce a thought connected with them, except to laugh at the fools who think to make themselves great men out of little by swaggering in the rear of a party. But either actually important events, or such as seemed so by their close neighbourhood to me, have always hurried me off my feet, and made me, as I have sometimes regretted, more forward and more violent than those who had a regular jog-trot way of busying themselves in public matters. Good luck; for had I lived in troublesome times, and chanced to be on the unhappy side, I had been hanged to a certainty. What I have always remarked has been, that many who have hallooed me on at public meetings, and so forth, have quietly left me to the odium which a man known to the public always has more than his own share of: while, on the other hand, they were easily successful in pressing before me, who never pressed forward at all, when there was any distribution of public favours or the like. I am horribly tempted to interfere in this business of altering the system of banks in Scotland; and yet I know that if I can attract any notice, I will offend my English friends, without propitiating our doom in Scotland. I will think of it till to-morrow. It is making myself of too much importance, after all.

"February 18.— I set about Malachi Malagrowther's Letter on the late disposition to change every thing in Scotland to an English model, but without resolving about the publication. They do treat us very provokingly.

'O Land of Cakes! said the Northern bard, Though all the world betrays thee, One faithful pen thy rights shall guard, One faithful harp shall praise thee.'*

* A parody on Moore's Minstrel Boy.

"February 19. — Finished my letter (Malachi Malagrowther) this morning, and sent it to James B., who is to call with the result this forenoon. I am not very anxious to get on with Woodstock. I want to see what Constable's people mean to do when they have their trustee. For an unfinished work they must treat with the author. It is the old story of the varnish spread over the picture, which nothing but the artist's own hand could remove. A finished work might be seized under some legal pretence.

"Being troubled with thick-coming fancies, and a slight palpitation of the heart, I have been reading the Chronicle of the Good Knight Messire Jacques de Lalain - curious, but dull, from the constant repetition of the same species of combats in the same style and phrase. It is like washing bushels of sand for a grain of gold. It passes the time, however, especially in that listless mood when your mind is half on your book, half on something else. You catch something to arrest the attention every now and then, and what you miss is not worth going back upon; idle man's studies, in short. Still, things occur to one. Something might be made of a tale of chivalry. - taken from the Passage of Arms, which Jacques de Lalain maintained for the first day of every month for a twelvemonth.* The first mention perhaps of red-hot balls appears in the siege of Oudenarde by the Citizens of Ghent - Chronique, p. 293. This would be light summer work.

"J. B. came and sat an hour. I led him to talk of Woodstock; and, to say truth, his approbation did me much good. I am aware it may, nay, must be partial; yet he is Tom Telltruth, and totally unable to disguise his real feelings. I think I make no habit of feeding on praise, and despise those whom I see greedy for it, as much as I should an underbred fellow who, after eating a cherry-tart, proceeded to lick the plate. But when one is flagging, a little praise (if it can be had genuine and unadulterated by flattery, which is as difficult to come by as the genuine mountain-dew) is a cordial after all.

^{*} This hint was taken up in Count Robert of Paris.



So now — vamos corazon — let us atone for the loss of the morning.

"February 20.—Yesterday, though late in beginning, I nearly finished my task, which is six of my close pages, about thirty pages of print, a full and uninterrupted day's work. To-day I have already written four, and with some confidence. Thus does flattery or praise oil the wheels. It is but two o'clock. Skene was here remonstrating against my taking apartments at the Albyn Club,* and recommending that I should rather stay with them. I told him that was altogether impossible. I hoped to visit them often, but for taking a permanent residence, I was altogether the Country Mouse, and voted for

— 'A hollow tree, A crust of bread and liberty.' †

The chain of friendship, however bright, does not stand the attrition of constant close contact.

"February 21.— Corrected the proofs of Malachi this morning; it may fall dead, and there will be a squib lost; it may chance to light on some ingredients of national feeling and set folk's beards in a blaze—and so much the better if it does. I mean, better for Scotland—not a whit for me. Attended the hearing in Parliament-House till near four o'clock, so I shall do little to-night, for I am tired and sleepy. One person talking for a long time, whether in pulpit, or at the bar, or anywhere else, unless the interest be great, and the eloquence of the highest character, sets me to sleep. I impudently lean my head on my hand in the Court, and take my nap without shame. The Lords may keep awake and mind their own affairs. Quod supra nos nihil ad nos. These clerks' stools are

This was a club-house on the London plan, in Prince's Street, a little eastward from the Mound. On its dissolution soon afterwards, Sir W. was elected by acclamation into the elder society called the New Club, who had then their house in St. Andrew's Square.

[†] Pope's Imitation of Horace, Book II. Sat. 6.

certainly as easy seats as are in Scotland, those of the Barons of the Exchequer always excepted.

"February 22. — Ballantyne breakfasted, and is to negotiate about Malachi with Blackwood. It reads not amiss; and if I can get a few guineas for it, I shall not be ashamed to take them; for, paying Lady Scott, I have just left between £8 and £4 for any necessary occasion, and my salary does not become due until 20th March, and the expense of removing, &c., is to be provided for:

'But shall we go mourn for that, my dear?'

The mere scarcity of money (so that actual wants are provided) is not poverty—it is the bitter draught to owe money which we cannot pay. Laboured fairly at Woodstock to-day, but principally in revising and adding to Malachi, of which an edition as a pamphlet is anxiously desired. I have lugged in my old friend Cardrona *—I hope it will not be thought unkindly. The Banks are anxious to have it published. They were lately exercising lenity towards me, and if I can benefit them, it will be an instance of the 'King's errand lying in the cadger's gate.'

"February 23.— Corrected two sheets of Woodstock this morning. These are not the days of idleness. The fact is, that the not seeing company gives me a command of my time which I possessed at no other period in my life, at least since I knew how to make some use of my leisure. There is a great pleasure in sitting down to write with the consciousness that nothing will occur during the day to break the spell. Detained in the Court till past three, and came home just in time to escape a terrible squall. I am a good deal jaded, and will not work till after dinner. There is a sort of drowsy

* The late Mr. Williamson of Cardrona, in Peeblesshire, was a strange humourist, of whom Sir Walter told many stories. The allusion here is to the anecdote of the Leetle Anderson in the first of Malachi's Epistles. — See Scott's Prose Miscellanies, vol. xxi. p. 289.



vacillation of mind attends fatigue with me. I command my pen as the school-copy recommends, but cannot equally command my thoughts, and often write one word for another. Read a little volume called the Omen — very well written — deep and powerful language.*

"February 24. - Went down to printing-office after the Court, and corrected Malachi. J. B. reproaches me with having taken much more pains in this temporary pamphlet than on works which have a greater interest on my fortunes. I have certainly bestowed enough of revision and correction. But the cases are different. In a novel or poem I run the course alone - here I am taking up the cudgels, and may expect a drubbing in return. Besides, I do feel that this is public matter in which the country is deeply interested; and, therefore, is far more important than anything referring to my fame or fortune alone. The pamphlet will soon be out meantime Malachi prospers and excites much attention. Banks have bespoke 500 copies. The country is taking the alarm; and, I think, the Ministers will not dare to press the measure. I should rejoice to see the old red lion ramp a little, and the thistle again claim its nemo me impune. I do believe Scotsmen will show themselves unanimous at last, where their cash is concerned. They shall not want backing. I incline to cry with Biron in Love's Labour Lost,

'More Atés, more Atés, stir them on.'

I suppose all imaginative people feel more or less of excitation from a scene of insurrection or tumult, or of general expression of national feeling. When I was a lad, poor Davie Douglas† used to accuse me of being cupidus novarum rerum, and say that I loved the stimulus of a broil. It might be so then, and even still—

[†] Lord Reston. - See ante, Vol. I. p. 56.



^{*} The Omen, by Mr. Galt, had just been published. — See Sir Walter's review of this novel in his Miscellaneous Prose Works, (Edin. Ed.) vol. xviii. p. 333, or in Blackwood's Magazine for July 1826. [John Galt died at Greenock in April 1839.]

'Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.' *

Whimsical enough, that when I was trying to animate Scotland against the currency bill, John Gibson brought me the deed of trust, assigning my whole estate, to be subscribed by me; so that I am turning patriot, and taking charge of the affairs of the country, on the very day I proclaim myself incapable of managing my own. What of that? Who would think of their own trumpery debts, when they are taking the support of the whole system of Scottish banking on their shoulders? Odd enough too—on this day, for the first time since the awful 17th January, we entertain a party at dinner—Lady Anna Maria Elliot,† W. Clerk, John A. Murray,‡ and Thomas Thomson—as if we gave a dinner on account of my cessio fori.

"February 25. - Our party yesterday went off very gaily; much laugh and fun, and I think I enjoyed it more from the rarity of the event - I mean from having seen society at home so seldom of late. My head aches slightly though; yet we were but a bottle of champaign, one of port, one of old sherry, and two of claret, among four gentlemen and three ladies. I have been led, from this incident, to think of taking chambers near Clerk, in Rose Court. Methinks the retired situation should suit me well. Then a man and woman would be my whole establishment. My superfluous furniture might serve, and I could ask a friend or two to dinner, as I have been accustomed to do. I shall look at the place to-day. I must set now to a second epistle of Malachi to the Athenians. If I can but get the sulky Scottish spirit set up, the devil won't turn them.

'Cock up your beaver, and cock it fu' sprush;
We'll over the Border, and give them a brush;
There's somebody there we'll teach better behaviour;
Hey, Johnnie, lad, cock up your beaver.'

• Grav's Elegy. † Now Lady A. M. Donkin.

[†] Afterwards Lord Advocate, and now a Judge of Session by the title of Lord Murray. — [1839.]

"February 26. — Spent the morning and till dinner on Malachi's second epistle. It is difficult to steer betwixt the natural impulse of one's national feelings setting in one direction, and the prudent regard to the interests of the empire and its internal peace and quiet, recommending less vehement expression. I will endeavour to keep sight of both. But were my own interest alone concerned, d—n me but I would give it them hot! Had some valuable communications from Colin Mackenzie, which will supply my plentiful lack of facts.

"Received an anonymous satire in doggrel, which, having read the first verse and last, I committed to the flames.— Peter Murray of Simprim called, and sat half-an-hour—an old friend, and who, from the peculiarity and originality of his genius, is one of the most entertaining companions I have ever known. But I must finish Malachi.

"February 27. — Malachi is getting on; I must finish him to-night. I dare say some of my London friends will be displeased — Canning perhaps, for he is engoué of Huskisson. Can't help it. — The place I looked at won't do; but I must really get some lodging, for, reason or none, Dalgleish will not leave me, and cries and makes a scene.* Now, if I staid alone in a little set of chambers, he would serve greatly for my accommodation. There are some places of the kind in the New Buildings; but they are distant from the Court, and I cannot walk well on the pavement. It is odd enough, that just when I had made a resolution to use my coach frequently, I ceased to keep one.

"February 28.— Completed Malachi to-day. It is more serious than the first, and in some places perhaps too peppery. Never mind; if you would have a horse kick, make a crupper out of a whin-cow;† and I trust to see Scotland kick and

[†] Whin-cow - Anglice, a bush of furze.



^{*} Dalgleish was Sir Walter's butler. He said he cared not how much his wages were reduced — but go he would not.

fling to some purpose. Woodstock lies back for this. But quid non pro patria?

"March 1. — Malachi is in the Edinburgh Journal to-day, and reads like the work of an uncompromising right-forward Scot of the old school. Some of the cautious and pluckless instigators will be afraid of their confederate; for if a man of some energy and openness of character happens to be on the same side with these jobbers, they stand as much in awe of his vehemence as did the inexperienced conjurer who invoked a fiend whom he could not manage. Came home in a heavy shower with the Solicitor. I tried him on the question, but found him reserved. The future Lord Advocate must be cautious; but I can tell my good friend John Hope, that if he acts the part of a firm and resolute Scottish patriot, both his own country and England will respect him the more. Ah! Hal Dundas, there was no truckling in thy day!

"Looked out a quantity of things, to go to Abbotsford; for we are flitting, if you please. It is with a sense of pain that I leave behind a parcel of trumpery prints and little ornaments, once the pride of Lady S---'s heart, but which she sees consigned with indifference to the chance of an auction. Things that have had their day of importance with me I cannot forget, though the merest trifles. But I am glad that she, with bad health, and enough to vex her, has not the same useless mode of associating recollections with this unpleasant busi-The best part of it is the necessity of leaving behind, viz. getting rid of, a set of most wretched daubs of landscapes, in great gilded frames, of which I have often been heartily The history of them was curious. An amateur artist (a lady) happened to fall into misfortunes, upon which her landscapes, the character of which had been buoyed up far beyond their proper level, sank now beneath it, and it was low enough. One most amiable and accomplished old lady continued to encourage her pencil, and to order pictures after pictures, which she sent in presents to her friends. I suppose I have eight or ten of them, which I could not avoid accepting. There will be plenty of laughing when they come to be sold. It would be a good joke enough to cause it to be circulated that they were performances of my own in early youth, and looked on and bought up as curiosities. —— Do you know why you have written all this down, Sir W.? You want to put off writing Woodstock, just as easily done as these memoranda, but which it happens your duty and your prudence recommend, and therefore you are loath to begin.

'Heigho,
I can't say no;
But this piece of task-work off I can stave, O,
For Malachi's posting into an octavo;
To correct the proof-sheets only this night I have, O,
So Conscience you've gotten as good as you gave, O;
But to-morrow a new day we'll better behave, O,
So I lay down the pen, and your pardon I crave, O.

"March 2. - I have a letter from Colin Mackenzie, approving Malachi, - 'Cold men may say it is too strong; but from the true men of Scotland you are sure of the warmest gratitude.' I never have yet found, nor do I expect it on this occasion, that ill-will dies in debt, or what is called gratitude distresses herself by frequent payments. The one is like a ward-holding, and pays its reddendo in hard blows. other a blanch-tenure, and is discharged for payment of a red rose, or a peppercorn. He that takes the forlorn hope in an attack, is often deserted by them that should support him, and who generally throw the blame of their own cowardice upon his rashness. We shall see this end in the same way. But I foresaw it from the beginning. The bankers will be persuaded that it is a squib which may burn their own fingers, and will curse the poor pyrotechnist that compounded it; - if they do, they be d-d. Slept indifferently, and dreamed of Napoleon's last moments, of which I was reading a medical account last night, by Dr. Arnott. Horrible death --- a cancer on the pylorus. I would have given something to have lain still this morning and made up for lost time. But desidiæ valedixi.

If you once turn on your side after the hour at which you ought to rise, it is all over. Bolt up at once. Bad night last—the next is sure to be better.

'When the drum beats, make ready;
When the fife plays, march away —
To the roll-call, to the roll-call, to the roll-call,
Before the break of day.'

"Dined with Chief-Commissioner: Admiral Adam, W. Clerk, Thomson, and I. The excellent old man was cheerful at intervals — at times sad, as was natural. A good blunder, he told us, occurred in the Annandale case, which was a question partly of domicile. It was proved, that leaving Lochwood, the Earl had given up his kain and carriages; * this an English counsel contended was the best of all possible proofs that the noble Earl designed an absolute change of residence, since he laid aside his walking-stick and his coach. First epistle of Malachi out of print already.

" March 3. - Could not get the last sheets of Malachi, Second Epistle, so they must go out to the world uncorrected - a great loss, for the last touches are always most effectual; and I expect misprints in the additional matter. We were especially obliged to have it out this morning that it may operate as a gentle preparative for the meeting of inhabitants at two o'clock. Voque la galere - we shall see if Scotsmen have any pluck left. If not, they may kill the next Percy themselves. It is ridiculous enough for me, in a state of insolvency for the present, to be battling about gold and paper currency - it is something like the humorous touch in Hogarth's Distressed Poet, where the poor starveling of the Muses is engaged, when in the abyss of poverty, in writing an Essay on Payment of the National Debt; and his wall is adorned with a plan of the mines of Peru. Nevertheless, even these fugitive attempts, from the success which they have had, and the

* Kain, in Scotch law, means payment in kind — Carriages, in the same phraseology, stands for services in driving with horse and cart.



noise they are making, serve to show the truth of the old proverb —

'When house and land are gone and spent, Then learning is most excellent.'

On the whole, I am glad of this bruilzie, as far as I am concerned; people will not dare talk of me as an object of pity—no more 'poor-manning.' Who asks how many punds Scots the old champion had in his pocket when

'He set a bugle to his mouth,
And blew so loud and shrill,
The trees in greenwood shook thereat,
Sae loud rang every hill?' *

This sounds conceited enough, yet is not far from truth.

"The meeting was very numerous, - five hundred or six hundred at least, and unanimous, saving one Mr. Howden, who having been all his life, as I am told, in bitter opposition to Ministers, proposed on the present occasion that the whole contested measure should be trusted to their wisdom. I suppose he chose the opportunity of placing his own opinion in opposition, single opposition too, to one of a large assembly. The speaking was very moderate. Report had said that Jeffrey, J. A. Murray, and other sages of the economical school, were to unbuckle their mails, and give us their opinions. But no such great guns appeared. If they had, having the multitude on my side, I would have tried to break a lance with them. A few short, but well expressed resolutions, were adopted unanimously. These were proposed by Lord Rollo, and seconded by Sir James Fergusson, Bart. I was named one of a committee to encourage all sorts of opposition to the measure. So I have already broken through two good and wise resolutions - one, that I would not write on political controversy; another, that I would not be named in public committees. If my good resolves go this way, like snaw aff a dyke - the Lord help me!

• Ballad of Hardyknute, slightly altered.

" March 4. - Last night I had a letter from Lockhart, who, speaking of Malachi, says, 'The Ministers are sore beyond imagination at present; and some of them, I hear, have felt this new whip on the raw to some purpose.' I conclude he means Canning is offended. I can't help it, as I said before - fiat justitia, ruat calum. No cause in which I had the alightest personal interest should have made me use my pen against them, blunt and pointed as it may be. But as they are about to throw this country into distress and danger, by a measure of useless and uncalled-for experiment, they must hear the opinion of the Scotsman, to whom it is of no other consequence than as a general measure affecting the country at large - and more they shall hear. I had determined to lay down the pen. But now they shall have another of Malachi, beginning with buffoonery, and ending as seriously as I can write it. It is like a frenzy that they will agitate the upper and middling classes of society, so very friendly to them, with unnecessary, and hazardous projects.

> 'Oh, thus it was they loved them dear, And sought how to requite 'em, And having no friends left but they, They did resolve to fight them.'

The country is very high just now. England may carry the measure if she will, doubtless. But what will be the consequence of the distress ensuing, God only can foretell. Lockhart, moreover, inquires about my affairs anxiously, and asks what he is to say about them; says 'he has inquiries every day; kind, most kind all, and among the most interested and anxious, Sir' William Knighton, who told me the King was quite melancholy all the evening he heard of it.' This I can well believe, for the King, educated as a prince, has nevertheless as true and kind a heart as any subject in his dominions. He goes on — 'I do think they would give you a Baron's gown as soon as possible,'&c. I have written to him in answer, showing I have enough to carry me on, and can dedicate my literary efforts to clear my land. The prefervore, viii.

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ment would suit me well, and the late Duke of Buccleuch gave me his interest for it. I dare say the young Duke would do the same, for the invaried love I have borne his house; and by and by he will have a voice potential. But there is Sir William Rae, whose prevailing claim I would never place my own in opposition to, even were it possible, by a tour de force, such as L. points at, to set it aside. Meantime, I am building a barrier betwixt me and promotion.

"In the meanwhile, now I am not pulled about for money, &c., methinks I am happier without my wealth than with it. Everything is paid. I have no one anxious to make up a sum, and pushing for his account to be paid. Since 17th January, I have not laid out a guinea, out of my own hand, save two or three in charity, and six shillings for a pocketbook. But the cash with which I set out having run short for family expenses, I drew on Blackwood, through Ballantyne, which was honoured, for £25, to account of Malachi's Letters, of which another edition of one thousand is ordered. and gave it to Lady Scott, because our removal will require that in hand. On the 20th my quarter comes in, and though I have something to pay out of it, I shall be on velvet for expense - and regular I will be. Methinks all trifling objects of expenditure seem to grow light in my eyes. That I may regain independence. I must be saving. But ambition awakes, as love of indulgence dies and is mortified within me. 'Dark Cuthullin will be renowned or dead.' *

"March 5. — Something of toddy and cigar in that last quotation, I think. Yet I only smoked two, and liquified with one glass of spirits and water. I have sworn I will not blot out what I have once written here.

"March 6.—Finished third Malachi, which I don't much like. It respects the difficulty of finding gold to replace the paper circulation. Now this should have been considered first.

^{*} Ossian.

The admitting that the measure may be imposed, is yielding up the question, and Malachi is like a commandant who should begin to fire from interior defences before his outworks were carried. If Ballantyne be of my own opinion, I will suppress it. We are all in a bustle shifting things to Abbotsford. It is odd, but I don't feel the impatience for the country which I have usually experienced.

"March 7. - Detained in the Court till three by a hearing. Then to the committee appointed at the meeting on Friday. to look after the small-note business. A pack of old faineants. incapable of managing such a business, and who will lose the day from mere coldness of heart. There are about a thousand names at the petition. They have added no designations - a great blunder; for testimonia sunt ponderanda non numeranda should never be lost sight of. They are disconcerted and helpless; just as in the business of the King's visit, when everybody threw the weight on me. In another time - so disgusted was I with seeing them sitting in ineffectual helplessness, spitting on the hot iron that lay before them, and touching it with a timid finger, as if afraid of being scalded, that I might have dashed in and taken up the hammer, summoned the deacons and other heads of public bodies, and by consulting them have carried them with me. But I cannot waste my time, health, and spirits, in fighting thankless battles. I left them in a quarter of an hour, and presage, unless the country make an alarm, the cause is lost. The philosophical reviewers manage their affairs better - hold off - avoid committing themselves, but throw their vis inertiæ into the opposite scale, and neutralize feelings which they cannot combat. To force them to fight on disadvantageous ground is our policy. But we have more sneakers after ministerial favour, than men who love their country, and who, upon a liberal scale, would serve their party. For to force the Whigs to avow an unpopular doctrine in popular assemblies, or to wrench the government of such bodies from them, would be a coup de maître. But they are alike destitute of manly resolution and sound policy. D-n

the whole nest of them! I have corrected the last of Malachi, and let the thing take its chance. I have made just enemies enough, and indisposed enough of friends.

" March 8. - At the Court, though a teind day. A foolish thing happened while the Court were engaged with the teinds. I amused myself with writing on a sheet of paper, notes on Frederick Maitland's account of the capture of Buonaparte; and I have lost these notes - shuffled in perhaps among my own papers, or those of the teind clerks. What a curious document to be found in a process of valuation. Being jaded and sleepy, I took up Le Duc de Guise on Naples. I think this, with the old Memoirs on the same subject which I have at Abbotsford, would enable me to make a pretty essay for the Quarterly. We must take up Woodstock now in good earnest. Mr. Cowan, a good and able man, is chosen trustee in Constable's affairs, with full power. From what I hear, the poor man Constable is not sensible of the nature of his own situation; for myself, I have succeeded in putting the matter perfectly out of my mind since I cannot help it, and have arrived at a flocci-pauci-nihili-pili-fication of misery, and I thank whoever invented that long word. They are removing our wine, &c. to the carts, and you will judge if our flitting is not making a noise in the world, or in the street at least.

" March 9. — I foresaw justly,

'When first I set this dangerous stone a-rolling,
'Twould fall upon myself.'*

Sir Robert Dundas to-day put into my hands a letter of between twenty and forty pages, in angry and bitter reprobation of Malachi, full of general averments, and very untenable arguments, all written at me by name, but of which I am to have no copy, and which is to be circulated to other special friends, to whom it may be necessary 'to give the sign to hate.' I got it at two o'clock, and returned it with an answer

* King Henry VIII. Act V. Scene 3.

four hours afterwards, in which I have studied not to be tempted into either sarcastic or harsh expressions. A quarrel it is, however, in all the forms, between my old friend and myself, and his Lordship's reprimand is to be read out in order to all our friends. They all know what I have said is true, but that will be nothing to the purpose if they are desired to consider it as false. Nobody at least can plague me for interest with Lord Melville as they used to do. By the way, from the tone of his letter, I think his Lordship will give up the measure, and I shall be the peace-offering. All will agree to condemn me as too warm - too rash - and yet rejoice in privileges which they would not have been able to save but for a little rousing of spirit, which will not perhaps fall asleep again. - A gentleman called on the part of a Captain Rutherford, to make inquiry about the Lord Rutherfords. Not being very eleever, as John Fraser used to say, at these pedigree matters, referred him to my cousin Robert Rutherford. Very odd -when there is a vacant, or dormant title in a Scottish family or name, everybody, and all connected with the clan, conceive they have quodam modo a right to it. Not being engrossed by any individual, it communicates part of its lustre to every individual in the tribe, as if it remained in common stock for that purpose.

"March 10.—I am not made entirely on the same mould of passions like other people. Many men would deeply regret a breach with so old a friend as Lord Melville, and many men would be in despair at losing the good graces of a Minister of State for Scotland, and all pretty views about what might be done for myself and my sons, especially Charles. But I think my good Lord doth ill to be angry, like the patriarch of old, and I have, in my odd sans souciance character, a good handful of meal from the grist of the Jolly Miller, who

'Once
Dwelled on the river Dee;
I care for nobody, no not I,
Since nobody cares for me.'

"Sandie Young "came in at breakfast-time with a Monsieur Brocque of Montpelier. Saw Sir Robert Dundas at Court. He is to send my letter to Lord Melville. Colin Mackenzie concurs in thinking Lord M. quite wrong. He must cool in the skin he het in.

"On coming home from the Court a good deal fatigued, I took a nap in my easy chair, then packed my books, and committed the refuse to Jock Stevenson—

'Left not a limb on which a Dane could triumph.'

Gave Mr. Gibson my father's cabinet, which suits a man of Gave Jock Stevenson the picture of my fabusiness well. vourite dog Camp, mentioned in one of the introductions to Marmion, and a little crow-quill drawing of Melrose Abbey by Nelson, whom I used to call the Admiral, poor fellow. He had some ingenuity, and was in a moderate way a good penman and draughtsman. He left his situation of amanuensis to go into Lord Home's militia regiment, but his dissipation got the better of a strong constitution, and he fell into bad habits and poverty, and died, I believe, in the Hospital at Liverpool. - Strange enough that Henry Weber, who acted afterwards as my amanuensis for many years, had also a melancholy fate ultimately. He was a man of very superior attainments, an excellent linguist and geographer, and a remarkable antiquary. He published a collection of ancient Romances, superior, I think, to the elaborate Ritson. He also published an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, but too carelessly done to be reputable. He was a violent Jacobin, which he thought he disguised from me, while I, who cared not a fig about the poor young man's politics, used to amuse myself with teazing him. He was an excellent and affectionate creature, but unhappily was afflicted with partial insanity, especially if he used strong liquors, to which, like others with that unhappy tendency, he was occasionally addicted. In 1814 he became quite insane, and, at the risk of my life, I had to

* Alexander Young, Esq. of Harburn — a steady Whig of the old school, and a steady and highly esteemed friend of Sir Walter's.



disarm him of a pair of loaded pistols, which I did by exerting the sort of authority which, I believe, gives an effectual control in such cases.* My patronage in this way has not been lucky to the parties protected. I hope poor George Huntly Gordon will escape the influence of the evil star. He has no vice, poor fellow, but his total deafness makes him helpless.

"March 11. — This day the Court rose after a long and laborious sederunt. I employed the remainder of the day in completing a set of notes on Captain Maitland's manuscript narrative of the reception of Napoleon Buonaparte on board the Bellerophon. It had been previously in the hands of my friend Basil Hall, who had made many excellent corrections in point of style; but he had been hypercritical in wishing (in so important a matter, where everything depends on accuracy) this expression to be altered, for delicacy's sake — that to be corrected, for fear of giving offence - and that other to be abridged, for fear of being tedious. The plain sailor's narrative for me, written on the spot, and bearing in its minuteness the evidence of its veracity. Lord Elgin sent me, some time since, a curious account of his imprisonment in France, and the attempts which were made to draw him into some intrigue which might authorize treating him with rigour.† He called to-day and communicated some curious circumstances, on the authority of Fouché, Denon, and others, respecting Buonaparte and the Empress Maria Louisa, whom Lord Elgin had conversed with on the subject in Italy. His conduct towards her was something like that of Ethwald to Elburga, in Joanna Baillie's fine tragedy, making her postpone her high rank by birth to the authority which he had acquired by his talents.



[&]quot; March 12. - Resumed Woodstock, and wrote my task of

^{*} See ante, Vol. IV. p. 9.

[†] See Life of Buonaparte — Miscellaneous Prose Works, (Edin. Ed.) vol. xi. pp. 346-351.

six pages. I cannot gurnalize, however, having wrought my eyes nearly out.

"March 13.— Wrote to the end of a chapter, and knowing no more than the man in the moon what comes next, I will put down a few of Lord Elgin's remembrances, and something may occur to me in the meanwhile..........

"I have hinted in these notes, that I am not entirely free from a sort of gloomy fits, with a fluttering of the heart and depression of spirits, just as if I knew not what was going to befall me. I can sometimes resist this successfully, but it is better to evade than to combat it. The hang-dog spirit may have originated in the confusion and chucking about of our old furniture, the stripping of walls of pictures, and rooms of ornaments; the leaving of a house we have so long called our home, is altogether melancholy enough. I am glad Lady S. does not mind it, and yet I wonder, too. She insists on my remaining till Wednesday, not knowing what I suffer. Meanwhile, to make my recusant spirit do penance. I have set to work to clear away papers and pack them for my journey. What a strange medley of thoughts such a task produces! There lie letters which made the heart throb when received. now lifeless and uninteresting - as are perhaps their writers - riddles which have been read - schemes which time has destroyed or brought to maturity - memorials of friendships and enmities which are now alike faded. Thus does the ring To-day annihilates vesterday, as of Saturn consume itself. the old tyrant swallowed his children, and the snake its tail. But I must say to my Journal as poor Byron did to Moore -'D-n it, Tom, don't be poetical.'

"March 14. — J. B. called this morning to take leave, and receive directions about proofs, &c. Talks of the uproar about Malachi; but I am tired of Malachi — the humour is off, and I have said what I wanted to say, and put the people of Scotland on their guard, as well as Ministers, if they like to be warned. They are gradually destroying what remains of na-

tionality, and making the country tabula rasa for doctrines of bold innovation. Their loosening and grinding down all those peculiarities which distinguished us as Scotsmen, will throw the country into a state in which it will be universally turned to democracy, and instead of canny Saunders, they will have a very dangerous North-British neighbourhood. Some lawyer expressed to Lord Elibank an opinion, that at the Union the English law should have been extended all over Scotland. 'I cannot say how that might have answered our purpose,' said Lord Patrick, who was never nonsuited for want of an answer, 'but it would scarce have suited yours, since by this time the Aberdeen Advocates* would have possessed themselves of all the business in Westminster Hall.'

"What a detestable feeling this fluttering of the heart is! I know it is nothing organic, and that it is entirely nervous; but the sickening effects of it are dispiriting to a degree. Is it the body brings it on the mind, or the mind that inflicts it on the body? I cannot tell; but it is a severe price to pay for the Fata Morgana with which Fancy sometimes amuses men of warm imaginations. As to body and mind, I fancy I might as well inquire whether the fiddle or fiddlestick makes the tune. In youth this complaint used to throw me into involuntary passions of causeless tears. But I will drive it away in the country by exercise. I wish I had been a mechanic: a turning-lathe or a chest of tools would have been a Godsend; for thought makes the access of melancholy rather worse than better. I have it seldom, thank God, and, I believe lightly, in comparison of others.

"It was the fiddle, after all, was out of order — not the fiddlestick; the body, not the mind. I walked out; met Mrs. Skene, who took a round with me in Prince's Street. Bade Constable and Cadell farewell, and had a brisk walk home, which enables me to face the desolation here with more spirit.

* The Attorneys of the town of Aberdeen are styled Advocates. This valuable privilege is said to have been bestowed at an early period by some (sportive) monarch.

News from Sophia. She has had the luck to get an antidruggist in a Dr. Gooch, who prescribes care for Johnnie instead of drugs, and a little home-brewed ale instead of wine; and, like a liberal physician, supplies the medicine he prescribes. As for myself, since I had scarce stirred to take exercise for four or five days, no wonder I had the mulligrubs. It is an awful sensation, though, and would have made an enthusiast of me, had I indulged my imagination on devotional subjects. I have been always careful to place my mind in the most tranquil posture which it can assume during my private exercises of devotion.

"I have amused myself occasionally very pleasantly during the last few days by reading over Lady Morgan's novel of O'Donnel, which has some striking and beautiful passages of situation and description, and in the comic part is very rich and entertaining. I do not remember being so much pleased with it at first. There is a want of story, always fatal to a book the first reading - and it is well if it gets a chance of a second. Alas, poor novel! Also read again, and for the third time at least, Miss Austen's very finely written novel of Pride and Prejudice. That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements, and feelings, and characters of ordinary life, which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The Big Bow-wow strain I can do myself like any now going; but the exquisite touch, which renders ordinary commonplace things and characters interesting, from the truth of the description and the sentiment, is denied to me. What a pity such a gifted creature died so early!

"March 15. — This morning I leave No. 39 Castle Street, for the last time. 'The cabin was convenient,' and habit had made it agreeable to me. I never reckoned upon a change in this particular so long as I held an office in the Court of Session. In all my former changes of residence it was from good to better; this is retrograding. I leave this house for sale, and I cease to be an Edinburgh citizen, in the sense of

being a proprietor, which my father and I have been for sixty years at least. So farewell, poor 39, and may you never harbour worse people than those who now leave you. Not to desert the Lares all at once, Lady S. and Anne remain till Sunday. As for me, I go, as aforesaid, this morning.

'Ha til mi tulidh'!-" .

* I return no more.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Domestic afflictions — Correspondence with Sir Robert Dundas and Mr. Croker on the subject of Malachi Malagrowther.

1826.

SIR WALTER'S Diary begins to be clouded with a darker species of distress than mere loss of wealth could bring to his spirit. His darling grandson is sinking apace at Brighton. The misfortunes against which his manhood struggled with stern energy were encountered by his affectionate wife under the disadvantages of enfeebled health; and it seems but too evident that mental pain and mortification had a great share in hurrying her ailments to a fatal end.

Nevertheless, all his afflictions do not seem to have interrupted for more than a day or two his usual course of labour. With rare exceptions he appears, all through this trying period, to have finished his daily task — thirty printed pages of Woodstock — until that novel was completed; or, if he paused in it, he gave a similar space of time to some minor production; such as his paper on Galt's Omen for Blackwood's Magazine — or his very valuable one on the Life of Kemble for the Quarterly Review. And hardly had Woodstock been finished before he began the Chronicles of the Canongate. He also corresponded much as usual (notwithstanding all he says about indolence on that score) with his absent friends;

and I need scarcely add, that his duties as Sheriff claimed many hours every week. The picture of resolution and industry which this portion of his Journal presents, is certainly as remarkable as the boldest imagination could have conceived.

Before I open the Diary again, however, I may as well place in what an ingenious contemporary novelist calls an "Inter-Chapter," three letters connected with the affair of Malachi Malagrowther. The first was addressed to the late Sir Robert Dundas (his colleague at the Clerk's table), on receiving through him the assurance that Lord Melville, however strong in his dissent from Malachi's views on the Currency Question, had not allowed that matter to interrupt his affectionate regard for the author. The others will speak for themselves.

"To Sir Robert Dundas of Dunira, Bart., Heriot Row, Edinburgh.

"My Dear Sir Robert, -- I had your letter to-day, and am much interested and affected by its contents. Whatever Lord Melville's sentiments had been towards me, I could never have lost remembrance of the very early friend with whom I carried my satchel to school, and whose regard I had always considered as one of the happiest circumstances of my life. I remain of the same opinion respecting the Letters, which have occasioned so much more notice than they would have deserved, had there not been a very general feeling in this country, and among Lord Melville's best friends too, authorizing some public remonstrances of the kind from some one like myself, who had nothing to win or to lose - or rather, who hazarded losing a great deal in the good opinion of friends whom he was accustomed not to value only, but to reverence. As to my friend Croker, an adventurer like myself, I would throw my hat into the ring for love, and give him a bellyful. But I do not feel there is any call on me to do so, as I could not do it without



entering into particulars, which I have avoided. If I had said. which I might have done, that, in a recent case, a gentleman holding an office under the Great Seal of Scotland, was referred to the English Crown Counsel - who gave their opinion - on which opinion the Secretary was prepared to act - that he was forcibly to be pushed from his situation, because he was, from age and malady, not adequate to its duties, - and that by a process of English law, the very name of which was unknown to us. - I would. I think, have made a strong case. But I care not to enter into statements to the public, the indirect consequence of which might be painful to some of our friends. I only venture to hope on that subject, that, suffering Malachi to go as a misrepresenter, or calumniator, or what they will, some attention may be paid that such grounds for calumny and misrepresentation shall not exist in future — I am contented to be the scape-goat. I remember the late Lord Melville defending, in a manner that defied refutation, the Scots laws against sedition, and I have lived to see these repealed, by what our friend Baron Hume calls 'a bill for the better encouragement of sedition and treason.' It will last my day probably; at least I shall be too old to be shot, and have only the honourable chance of being hanged for incivisme. The whole burgher class of Scotland are gradually preparing for radical reform - I mean the middling and respectable classes; and when a burgh reform comes, which perhaps cannot long be delayed, Ministers will not return a member for Scotland from the towns. The gentry will abide longer by sound principles; for they are needy, and desire advancement for their sons, and appointments, and so on. But this is a very hollow dependence, and those who sincerely hold ancient opinions are waxing old.

"Differing so much as we do on this head, and holding my own opinion as I would do a point of religious faith, I am sure I ought to feel the more indebted to Lord Melville's kindness and generosity for suffering our difference to be no breach in our ancient friendship. I shall always feel his sentiments in this respect as the deepest obligation I

owe him; for, perhaps, there are some passages in Malachi's epistles that I ought to have moderated. But I desired to make a strong impression, and speak out, not on the Currency Question alone, but on the treatment of Scotland generally, the opinion which, I venture to say, has been long entertained by Lord Melville's best friends, though who that had anything to hope or fear would have hesitated to state it? So much for my Scottish feelings - prejudices, if you will; but which were born, and will die with me. For those I entertain towards Lord Melville personally, I can only say that I have lost much in my life; but the esteem of an old friend is that I should regret the most; and I repeat I feel most sensibly the generosity and kindness so much belonging to his nature, which can forgive that which has probably been most offensive to him. People may say I have been rash and inconsiderate; they cannot say I have been either selfish or malevolent - I have shunned all the sort of popularity attending the discussion; nav, have refused to distribute the obnoxious letters in a popular form, though urged from various quarters.

"Adieu! God bless you, my dear Sir Robert! You may send the whole or any part of this letter if you think proper; I should not wish him to think that I was sulky about the continuance of his friendship. — I am yours most truly,

"WALTER SCOTT."

" To Sir Walter Scott, Bart.

[Private and confidential.]

Admiralty, March 16, 1826.

"My Dear Scott, — I have seen Lord Melville's and your letters to Sir R. Dundas, and the tone of both of them makes me feel very anxious to say a confidential word or two to you on the subject. I am not going to meddle with the politics, which are bad enough in printed letters, but to endeavour, in the cordiality of a sincere private friendship, to satisfy you that these differences on speculative points of public

policy do not, in this region, and ought not in yours, to cause any diminution of private intercourse and regard. Lord Melville certainly felt that his administration of Scottish affairs was sweepingly attacked, and the rest of the Government were astonished to see the one-pound note question made a kind of war-cry which might excite serious practical consequences; and, no doubt, these feelings were expressed pretty strongly, but it was in the spirit of et tu, Brute! The regard, the admiration, the love, which we all bear towards you, made the stroke so much more painful to those who thought it directed at them; but that feeling was local and temporary: by local, I mean that the pain was felt on the spot where the blow was given - and I hope and believe it was so temporary as to be already forgotten. I can venture to assure you that it did not at all interfere with the deep sympathy with which we all heard of the losses you had sustained, nor would it, I firmly believe, have caused a moment's hesitation in doing anything which might be useful or agreeable to you, if such an opportunity had occurred. However Lord Melville may have expressed his soreness on what, it must be admitted, was an attack on him, as being for the last twenty years the Minister for Scotland, there is not a man in the world who would be more glad to have an opportunity of giving you any mark of his regard; and from the moment we heard of the inconvenience you suffered, even down to this hour, I do not believe he has had another feeling towards you privately, than that which you might have expected from his general good-nature and his particular friendship for you.

"As to myself (if I may venture to name myself to you), I am so ignorant of Scottish affairs, and so remote from Scottish interest, that you will easily believe that I felt no personal discomposure from Mr. Malagrowther. What little I know of Scotland you have taught me, and my chief feeling on this subject was wonder that so clever a fellow as M. M. could entertain opinions so different from those which I fancied that I had learnt from you. But this has nothing to

If I differed from M. M. as do with our private feelings. widely as I do from Mr. M'Culloch, that need not affect my private feelings towards Sir Walter Scott, nor his towards me. He may feel the matter very warmly as a Scotchman: I can only have a very general, and therefore proportionably faint interest in the subject. - But in either case you and I are not, like Sir Archy and Sir Callaghan, to quarrel about Sir Archy's great-grandmother. - But I find that I am dwelling too long on so insignificant a part of the subject as myself. I took up my pen with the intention of satisfying you as to the feelings of more important persons, and I shall now quit the topic altogether, with a single remark, that this letter is strictly confidential, that even Lord Melville knows nothing of it, and à plus forte raison, nobody else. — Believe me to be, my dear Scott, most sincerely and affectionately yours,

"J. W. CROKER."

" To J. W. Croker, Esq., M. P., &c. &c., Admiralty.

"Abbotsford, 19th March 1826.

"My Dear Croker — I received your very kind letter with the feelings it was calculated to excite - those of great affection mixed with pain, which, indeed, I had already felt and anticipated before taking the step which I knew you must all feel as awkward, coming from one who has been honoured with so much personal regard. I need not, I am sure, say, that I acted from nothing but an honest desire of serving this country. Depend upon it, that if a succession of violent and experimental changes are made from session to session, with bills to amend bills, where no want of legislation had been at all felt, Scotland will, within ten or twenty years, perhaps much sooner, read a more fearful commentary on poor Malachi's Epistles than any statesman residing out of the country, and stranger to the habits and feelings which are entertained here, can possibly anticipate. My head may be low - I hope it will - before the time comes. But Scotland, completely liberalized, as she is in a fair way of being, will be the most VOL. VIII.

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dangerous neighbour to England that she has had since 1639. There is yet time to make a stand, for there is yet a great deal of good and genuine feeling left in the country. But if you unscotch us, you will find us damned mischievous English-The restless and vet laborious and constantly watchful character of the people, their desire for speculation in politics or anything else, only restrained by some proud feelings about their own country, now become antiquated, and which late measures will tend much to destroy, will make them, under a wrong direction, the most formidable revolutionists who ever took the field of innovation. The late Lord Melville knew them well, and managed them accordingly. Our friend, the present Lord Melville, with the same sagacity, has not the same advantages. His high office has kept him much in the south; - and when he comes down here, it is to mingle with persons who have almost all something to hope or ask for at his hands.

"But I shall say no more on this subject so far as politics are concerned, only you will remember the story of the shield, which was on one side gold, and on the other silver, and which two knights fought about till they were mutually mortally wounded, each avowing the metal to be that which he himself witnessed. You see the shield on the golden, I, God knows, not on the silver side — but in a black, gloomy, and most ominous aspect.

"With respect to your own share in the controversy, it promised me so great an honour that I laboured under a strong temptation to throw my hat into the ring, tie my colours to the ropes, cry, Hollo there, Saint Andrew for Scotland! and try what a good cause might do for a bad, at least an inferior, combatant. But then I must have brought forward my facts; and, as these must have compromised friends individually concerned, I felt myself obliged, with regret for forfeiting some honour, rather to abstain from the contest. Besides, my dear Croker, I must say that you sported too many and too direct personal allusions to myself, not to authorize and even demand some retaliation dans le meme genre:

and however good-humouredly men begin this sort of 'sharp encounter of their wits,' their temper gets the better of them at last. When I was a cudgel-player, a sport at which I was once an ugly customer, we used to bar rapping over the knuckles, because it always ended in breaking heads; the matter may be remedied by baskets in a set-to with oak saplings, but I know no such defence in the rapier-and-poniard game of wit. So I thought it best not to endanger the loss of an old friend for a bad jest, and sit quietly down with your odd hits, and the discredit which I must count on here for not repaying them, or trying to do so.

"As for my affairs, which you allude to so kindly, I can safely say, that no oak ever quitted its withered leaves more easily than I have done what might be considered as great wealth. I wish to God it were as easy for me to endure impending misfortunes of a very different kind. You may have heard that Lockhart's only child is very ill, and the delicate habits of the unfortunate boy have ended in a disease of the spine, which is a hopeless calamity, and in my daughter's present situation may have consequences on her health terrible for me to anticipate. To add to this, though it needs no addition - for the poor child's voice is day and night in my ear -I have, from a consultation of physicians, a most melancholy account of my wife's health, the faithful companion of rough and smooth, weal and wo, for so many years. So if-you compare me to Brutus in the harsher points of his character, you must also allow me some of his stoical fortitude — 'no man hears sorrow better.'*

"I cannot give you a more absolute assurance of the uninterrupted regard with which I must always think of you, and the confidence I repose in your expressions of cordiality, than by entering on details, which one reluctantly mentions, except to those who are sure to participate in them.

"As for Malachi, I am like poor Jean Gordon, the prototype of Meg Merrilees, who was ducked to death at Carlisle for being a Jacobite, and till she was smothered outright, cried out every

^{*} Julius Casar, Act IV. Scene 3.

time she got her head above water, Charlie yet. But I have said my say, and have no wish to give my friends a grain more offence than is consistent with the discharge of my own feelings, which, I think, would have choked me if I had not got my breath out. I had better, perhaps, have saved it to cool my porridge; I have only the prospect of being a sort of Highland Cassandra. But even Cassandra tired of her predictions, I suppose, when she had cried herself hoarse, and disturbed all her friends by howling in their ears what they were not willing to listen to.

"And so God bless you — and believe, though circumstances have greatly diminished the chance of our meeting, I have the same warm sense of your kindness as its uniform tendency has well deserved. — Yours affectionately,

"WALTER SCOTT."

CHAPTER LXX.

Diary resumed — Abbotsford in solitude — Death of Sir A.

Don — Review of the Life of Kemble, &c. — Conclusion
of Woodstock — Death of Lady Scott — Chronicles of the
Canongate begun — Letter to Miss Edgeworth.

APRIL -- MAY 1826.

DIARY.

"Abbotsford, March 15, - 9 at night. - The naturally unpleasant feelings which influenced me in my ejectment, for such it is virtually, readily evaporated in the course of the journey, though I had no pleasanter companions than Mrs. Mackay the housekeeper and one of the maids; and I have a shyness of disposition, which looks like pride, but is not, which makes me awkward in speaking to my household domestics. With an out-of-doors' labourer or an old woman gathering sticks I can crack for ever. I was welcomed here on my arrival by the tumult great of men and dogs, all happy to see me. One of my old labourers killed by the fall of a stone working at Gattonside Bridge. Old Will Straiton, my man of wisdom and proverbs, also dead. He was entertaining from his importance and self-conceit, but really a sensible old man. When he heard of my misfortunes, he went to bed, and said he would not rise again, and kept his word. He was very infirm when I last saw him. Tom Purdie in great glory, being released from all farm duty, and destined to attend the woods and be my special assistant.



" March 17. - Sent off a packet to J. B.; only three pages copy - so must work hard for a day or two. I wish I could wind up my bottom handsomely (an odd but accredited phrase); the conclusion will not be luminous — we must try to make it dashing. Have a good deal to do between hands in sorting up - hourly arrival of books. I need not have exulted so soon in having attained ease and quiet. I am robbed of both with a vengeance. A letter from Lockhart. worst augury is verified; the medical people think poor Johnnie is losing strength; he is gone with his mother to Brighton. The bitterness of this probably impending calamity is extreme. The child was almost too good for this world; beautiful in features; and though spoiled by every one, having one of the sweetest tempers as well as the quickest intellect I ever saw; a sense of humour quite extraordinary in a child, and, owing to the general notice which was taken of him, a great deal more information than suited his hours. He was born in the eighth month, and such children are never strong - seldom long-lived. I look on this side and that, and see nothing but protracted misery - a crippled frame, and decayed constitution, occupying the attention of his parents for years, and dying at the end of that period, when their hearts were turned on him; or the poor child may die before Sophia's confinement, and that may again be a dangerous and bad affair; or she may, by increase of attention to him, injure her own health. In short, to trace into how many branches such a misery may flow, is impossible. The poor dear love had so often a slow fever, that when it pressed its little lips to mine, I always foreboded to my own heart, what all I fear are now aware of.

"March 18. — Slept indifferently, and under the influence of Queen Mab, seldom auspicious to me. Dreamed of reading the tale of the Prince of the Black Marble Islands to little Johnnie, extended on a paralytic chair, and yet telling all his pretty stories about Ha-Papa, as he calls me, and Chiefswood — and waked to think I should see the little darling no more,

or see him as a thing that had better never have existed. Oh, misery, misery, that the best I can wish for him is early death, with all the wretchedness to his parents that is likely to ensue! I had intended to have staid at home to-day; but Tom more wisely had resolved that I should walk, and hung about the window with his axe and my own in his hand till I turned out with him, and helped to cut some fine paling.

"March 19.—Lady S., the faithful and true companion of my fortunes, good and bad, for so many years, has, but with difficulty, been prevailed on to see Dr. Abercrombie, and his opinion is far from favourable. Her asthmatic complaints are fast terminating in hydropsy, as I have long suspected; yet the announcement of the truth is overwhelming. They are to stay a little longer in town to try the effects of a new medicine. On Wednesday they propose to return hither—a new affliction, where there was enough before; yet her constitution is so good, that if she will be guided by advice, things may be yet ameliorated. God grant it! for really these misfortunes come too close upon each other.

"March 20. — Despatched proofs and copy this morning; and Swanston the carpenter coming in, I made a sort of busy idle day of it with altering and hanging pictures and prints, to find room for those which came from Edinburgh, and by dint of being on foot from ten to near five, put all things into applepie order. What strange beings we are! The serious duties I have on hand cannot divert my mind from the most melancholy thoughts; and yet the talking of these workmen, and the trifling occupation which they give me, serves to dissipate my attention. The truth is, I fancy that a body under the impulse of violent motion cannot be stopped or forced back, but may indirectly be urged into a different channel. In the evening I read and sent off my sheriff-court processes.

"March 21.— Perused an attack upon myself, done with as much ability as truth, by no less a man than Joseph Hume,



the night-work man of the House of Commons, who lives upon petty abuses, and is a very useful man by so doing. He has had the kindness to say that I am interested in keeping up the taxes; I wish I had anything else to do with them than to pay them. But he is an ass, and not worth a man's thinking about. Joseph Hume, indeed!—I say Joseph Hum,—and could add a Swiftian rhyme, but forbear. Busy in unpacking and repacking. I wrote five pages of Woodstock, which work begins

'To appropinque an end.' *

"March 23.—Lady Scott arrived yesterday to dinner. She was better than I expected, but Anne, poor soul, looked very poorly, and had been much worried with the fatigue and discomfort of the last week. Lady S. takes the digitalis, and, as she thinks, with advantage, though the medicine makes her very sick. Yet on the whole, things are better than my gloomy apprehensions had anticipated. Took a brushing walk, but not till I had done a good task.

"March 24.— Sent off copy, proofs, &c., to J. B.; clamorous for a motto. It is foolish to encourage people to expect such decoraments. It is like being in the habit of showing feats of strength, which you gain little praise by accomplishing, while some shame occurs in failure.

"March 26.— Here is a disagreeable morning; snowing and hailing, with gleams of bright sunshine between, and all the ground white, and all the air frozen. I don't like this jumbling of weather. It is ungenial, and gives chilblains. Besides, with its whiteness, and its coldness, and its discomfort, it resembles that most disagreeable of all things, a vain, cold, empty, beautiful woman, who has neither mind nor heart, but only features like a doll. I do not know what is so like this disagreeable day, when the sun is so bright, and yet so uninfluential, that

* Hudibras.

'One may gaze upon its beams, Till he is starved with cold.'

No matter, it will serve as well as another day to finish Woodstock. Walked right to the lake, and coquetted with this disagreeable weather, whereby I catch chilblains in my fingers, and cold in my head. Fed the swans. Finished Woodstock, however, cum toto sequela of title-page, introduction, &c., and so, as Dame Fortune says in Quevedo,

' Fly wheel, and the devil drive thee.' *

" March 27. — Another bright cold day. I answered two modest requests from widow ladies. One, whom I had already assisted in some law business, on the footing of her having visited my mother, requested me to write to Mr. Peel, saying, on her authority, that her second son, a youth of infinite merit and accomplishment, was fit for any situation in a public office, and that I requested he might be provided accordingly. Another widowed dame, whose claim is having read Marmion and the Lady of the Lake, besides a promise to read all my other works - Gad, it is a rash engagement! - demands that I shall either pay £200 to get her cub into some place or other, or settle him in a seminary of education. Really this is very much after the fashion of the husbandman of Miguel Turra's requests of Sancho when Governor. 'Have you anything else to ask, honest man?' quoth Sancho. But what are the demands of an honest man to those of an honest woman, and she a widow to boot? I do believe your destitute widow, especially if she hath a charge of children, and one or two fit for patronage, is one of the most impudent animals living. Went to Galashiels, and settled the dispute about Sandie's Wall.



[&]quot;March 28. — We have now been in solitude for some time — myself nearly totally so, excepting at meals. One is

^{*} Fortune in her Wits, and the Hour of all Men. — QUEVEDO'S WORKS, Edinburgh, 1798, vol. iii. p. 107.

tempted to ask himself, knocking at the door of his own heart, Do you love this extreme loneliness? I can answer conscientiously, I do. The love of solitude was with me a passion of early youth; when in my teens, I used to fly from company to indulge in visions and airy castles of my own, the disposal of ideal wealth, and the exercise of imaginary power. This feeling prevailed even till I was eighteen, when love and ambition awakening with other passions, threw me more into society, from which I have, however, at times withdrawn myself, and have been always even glad to do so. I have risen from a feast satiated; and unless it be one or two persons of very strong intellect, or whose spirits and good-humour amuse me. I wish neither to see the high, the low, nor the middling, class of society. This is a feeling without the least tinge of misanthropy, which I always consider as a kind of blaspheny of a shocking description. If God bears with the very worst of us, we may surely endure each other. If thrown into society, I always have, and always will endeavour to bring pleasure with me, at least to show willingness to please. But for all this, 'I had rather live alone,' and I wish my appointment, so convenient otherwise, did not require my going to Edinburgh. But this must be, and in my little lodging I shall be lonely enough. Reading at intervals a novel called Granby, one of the class that aspire to describe the actual current of society, whose colours are so evanescent, that it is difficult to fix them on the canvass. It is well written, but over-laboured - too much attempt to put the reader exactly up to the thoughts and sentiments of the parties. The women do this better: Edgeworth, Ferrier, Austen, have all given portraits of real society, far superior to anything man, vain man, has produced of the like nature.

"March 29. — Worked in the morning. Walked from one till half-past four. A fine flashy disagreeable day — snow-clouds sweeping past among sunshine, driving down the valley, and whitening the country behind them. Mr. Gibson came suddenly in after dinner. Brought very indifferent news from

Constable's house. It is not now hoped that they will pay above three or four shillings in the pound. Robinson supposed not to be much better. Mr. G. goes to London immediately, to sell Woodstock. This work may fail, perhaps, though better than some of its predecessors. If so, we must try some new manner. I think I could catch the dogs yet. A beautiful and perfect lunar rainbow to-night.

"April 1. - Ex uno die disce omnes. - Rose at seven or sooner, studied and wrote till breakfast with Anne, about a quarter before ten. Lady Scott seldom able to rise till twelve or one. Then I write or study again till one. At that hour to-day I drove to Huntly Burn, and walked home by one of the hundred and one pleasing paths which I have made through the woods I have planted - now chatting with Tom Purdie, who carries my plaid, and speaks when he pleases. telling long stories of hits and misses in shooting twenty years back - sometimes chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy - and sometimes attending to the humours of two curious little terriers of the Dandie Dinmont breed, together with a noble wolf-hound puppy which Glengarry has given me to replace Maida. This brings me down to the very moment I do tell - the rest is prophetic. I shall feel drowsy when this book is locked, and perhaps sleep until Dalgleish brings the dinner summons. Then I shall have a chat with Lady S. and Anne; some broth or soup, a slice of plain meat - and man's chief business, in Dr. Johnson's estimation, is briefly despatched. Half an hour with my family, and half an hour's coquetting with a cigar, a tumbler of weak whisky and water, and a novel perhaps, lead on to tea, which sometimes consumes another half hour of chat; then write and read in my own room till ten o'clock at night; a little bread, and then a glass of porter, and to bed; — and this, very rarely varied by a visit from some one, is the tenor of my daily life - and a very pleasant one indeed, were it not for apprehensions about Lady S. and poor Johnnie Hugh. The former will, I think, do well; for the latter - I fear - I fear -

"April 2.— I am in a wayward humour this morning. I received yesterday the last proof-sheets of Woodstock, and I ought to correct them. Now, this ought sounds as like as possible to must, and must I cannot abide. I would go to Prester John's country of free good-will, sooner than I would must it to Edinburgh. Yet this is all folly, and silly folly too; and so must shall be for once obeyed after I have thus written myself out of my aversion to its peremptory sound.— Corrected the said proofs till twelve o'clock—when I think I will treat resolution, not to a dram, as the fellow said after he had passed the gin-shop, but to a walk, the rather that my eyesight is somewhat uncertain and wavering.

" April 3. - I have the extraordinary and gratifying news that Woodstock is sold for £8228; all ready money - a matchless sale for less than three months' work.* If Napoleon does as well, or near it, it will put the trust affairs in high flourish. Four or five years of leisure and industry would, with such success, amply replace my losses. I have a curious fancy: I will go set two or three acorns, and judge by their success in growing whether I shall succeed in clearing my way or not. I have a little toothach keeps me from working much to-day. besides I sent off, per Blucher, copy for Napoleon, as well as the d-d proofs. - A blank forenoon! But how could I help it, Madam Duty? I was not lazy; on my soul I was not. I did not cry for half holiday for the sale of Woodstock. But in came Colonel Fergusson with Mrs. Stewart of Blackhill, or hall, or something, and I must show her the garden, pictures, This lasts till one; and just as they are at their lunch, and about to go off, guard is relieved by the Laird and Lady Harden, and Miss Eliza Scott - and my dear Chief, whom I love very much, proving a little obsidional or so, remains till three. That same crown, composed of the grass which grew on the walls of besieged places, should be offered to visiters

* The reader will understand that, the Novel being sold for the behoof of James Ballantyne and Company's creditors, this sum includes the cost of printing the first edition, as well as paper. who stay above an hour in any eident* person's house. Wrote letters this evening.

"April 4. - Wrote two pages in the morning. Then went to Ashestiel with Colonel Fergusson. Found my cousin Russell settled kindly to his gardening, &c. He seems to have brought home with him the enviable talent of being interested and happy in his own place. Ashestiel looks waste, I think, at this time of the year, but is a beautiful place in summer. where I passed some happy years. Did I ever pass unhappy years anywhere? None that I remember, save those at the High School, which I thoroughly detested on account of the confinement. I disliked serving in my father's office, too, from the same hatred to restraint. In other respects, I have had unhappy days, unhappy weeks - even, on one or two occasions, unhappy months; but Fortune's finger has never been able to play a dirge on me for a quarter of a year together. I am sorry to see the Peel-wood and other natural coppice decaying and abridged about Ashestiel -

> 'The horrid plough has razed the green, Where once my children play'd; The axe has fell'd the hawthorn screen, The schoolboy's summer shade.' †

"There was a very romantic pasturage, called the Cow-park, which I was particularly attached to, from its wild and sequestered character. Having been part of an old wood which had been cut down, it was full of copse — hazel, and oak, and all sorts of young trees, irregularly scattered over fine pasturage, and affording a hundred intricacies so delicious to the eye and the imagination. But some misjudging friend had cut down and cleared away without mercy, and divided the varied and sylvan scene (which was divided by a little rivulet) into the two most formal things in the world—a thriving plantation, many-angled, as usual—and a park laid down in grass; wanting, therefore, the rich graminivorous variety which Nature



^{*} Eident, i. e. eagerly diligent.

[†] These lines are slightly altered from Logan.

gives her carpet, and showing instead a braird of six days' growth — lean and hungry growth too — of rye-grass and clover. As for the rill, it stagnates in a deep square ditch, which silences its prattle, and restrains its meanders with a witness. The original scene was, of course, imprinted still deeper on Russell's mind than mine, and I was glad to see he was intensely sorry for the change.

"April 5.— Rose late in the morning to give the cold and toothach time to make themselves scarce, which they have obligingly done. Yesterday every tooth on the right side of my head was absolutely waltzing. I would have drawn by the half-dozen, but country dentists are not to be lippened to.* To-day all is quietness, but a little stiffness and swelling in the jaw. Worked a fair task; dined, and read Clapperton's journey and Denham's into Bornou. Very entertaining, and less botheration about mineralogy, botany, and so forth, than usual. Pity Africa picks off so many brave men, however. Work again in the evening.

"April 6.— Wrote in the morning. Went at one to Huntly Burn, where I had the great pleasure to hear, through a letter from Sir Adam, that Sophia was in health, and Johnnie gaining strength. It is a fine exchange from deep and aching uncertainty on so interesting a subject, to the little spitfire feeling of 'Well, but they might have taken the trouble to write.' But so wretched a correspondent as myself has not much to say, so I will but grumble sufficiently to maintain the patriarchal dignity. I returned in time to work, and to have a shoal of things from J. B. Among others, a letter from an Irish lady, who, for the beaux yeux which I shall never look upon, desires I may forthwith send her all the Waverley Novels, which she assures me will be an era in her life. She may find out some other epocha.

"April 7. — Made out my morning's task — at one drove to

* Lippened to — i. e. relied upon.



Chiefswood, and walked home by the Rhymer's Glen, Mar's Lee, and Haxell-Cleugh. Took me three hours. The heath gets somewhat heavier for me every year—but never mind, I like it altogether as well as the day I could tread it best. The plantations are getting all into green leaf, especially the larches, if theirs may be called leaves, which are only a sort of hair. As I returned, there was, in the phraseology of that most precise of prigs in a white collarless coat and chapeau bras, Mister Commissary * * * * * *, 'a rather dense inspissation of rain.' Deil care.

'Lord, who would live turmoiled in the Court, And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?'*

Yet misfortune comes our way too. Poor Laidlaw lost a fine prattling child of five years old yesterday. It is odd enough — John, the Kentish Esquire, has just made the ejaculation which I adopted in the last page, when he kills Cade, and posts away up to Court to get the price set upon his head:—here is a letter come from Lockhart, full of Court news, and all sorts of news. He erroneously supposes that I think of applying to Ministers about Charles. I would not make such an application for millions; I think if I were to ask patronage it would not be through them, for some time at least, and I might have better access.†

"April 8.— We expect a raid of folks to visit us this morning, whom we must have dined before our misfortunes. Save time, wine, and money, these misfortunes — and so far are convenient things. Besides, there is a dignity about them when they come only like the gout in its mildest shape, to authorize diet and retirement, the night-gown and the velvet shoe; when the one comes to chalk-stones, and you go to prison through the other, it is the devil. Or compare the effects of Sieur Gout and absolute poverty upon the stomach — the ne-

[†] In a letter of the same day he says — "My interest, as you might have known, lies Windsor-way."



^{* 2}d King Henry VI. Act. IV. Scene 10.

cessity of a bottle of laudanum in the one case, the want of a morsel of meat in the other. Laidlaw's infant which died on Wednesday is buried to-day. The people coming to visit prevent my going, and I am glad of it. I hate funerals - always did. There is such a mixture of mummery with real griefthe actual mourner perhaps heart-broken, and all the rest making solemn faces, and whispering observations on the weather and public news, and here and there a greedy fellow enjoying the cake and wine. To me it is a farce of most tragical mirth, and I am not sorry (like Provost Coulter *) but glad that I shall not see my own. This is a most unfilial tendency of mine, for my father absolutely loved a funeral; and as he was a man of a fine presence, and looked the mourner well, he was asked to every interment of distinction. seemed to preserve the list of a whole bead-roll of cousins. merely for the pleasure of being at their funerals, which he was often asked to superintend, and I suspect had sometimes to pay for. He carried me with him as often as he could to these mortuary ceremonies; but feeling I was not, like him, either useful or ornamental, I escaped as often as I could. saw the poor child's funeral from a distance. Ah, that Distance! What a magician for conjuring up scenes of joy or sorrow, smoothing all asperities, reconciling all incongruities, veiling all absurdities, softening every coarseness, doubling every effect by the influence of the imagination. A Scottish wedding should be seen at a distance — the gay band of dancers just distinguished amid the elderly group of the spectators - the glass held high, and the distant cheers as it is swallowed, should be only a sketch, not a finished Dutch picture, when it becomes brutal and boorish. Scotch psalmody, too, should be heard from a distance. The grunt and the snivel, and the whine and the scream, should all be blended in that deep and distant sound, which, rising and falling like the Eolian harp, may have some title to be called the praise of one's Maker. Even so the distant funeral: the few mourners on horseback, with their plaids wrapped around

^{*} See ante, Vol. III. p. 77.

them — the father heading the procession as they enter the river, and pointing out the ford by which his darling is to be carried on the last long road — none of the subordinate figures in discord with the general tone of the incident, but seeming just accessions, and no more; — this is affecting.

"April 12.—I have finished my task this morning at halfpast eleven—easily and early—and, I think, not amiss. I hope J. B. will make some great points of admiration!!!—otherwise I shall be disappointed. If this work answers—if it but answers, it must set us on our legs; I am sure worse trumpery of mine has had a great run. I remember with what great difficulty I was brought to think myself something better than common, and now I will not in mere faintness of heart give up good hopes.

"April 13. - On my return from my walk yesterday, I learnt with great concern the death of my old friend, Sir Alexander Don. He cannot have been above six or sevenand-forty. Without being much together, we had, considering our different habits, lived in much friendship, and I sincerely regret his death. His habits were those of a gay man, much connected with the turf; but he possessed strong natural parts, and in particular few men could speak better in public when he chose. He had tact, with power of sarcasm, and that indescribable something which marks the gentleman. His manners in society were extremely pleasing, and as he had a taste for literature and the fine arts, there were few more agreeable companions, besides being a highly-spirited, steady, and honourable man. His indolence prevented his turning these good parts towards acquiring the distinction he might have attained. He was among the detenus whom Buonaparte's iniquitous commands confined so long in France; and coming into possession of a large estate in right of his mother, the heiress of the Glencairn family, he had the means of being very expensive, and probably then acquired those gay habits which rendered him averse to serious business. Be-VOL. VIII.

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ing our member for Roxburghshire, his death will make a stir amongst us. I prophesy Harden will be here, to talk about starting his son Henry.— Accordingly the Laird and Lady called. I exhorted him to write instantly. There can be no objection to Henry Scott for birth, fortune, or political principles; and I do not see where we could get a better representative.

"April 15. — Received last night letters from Sir John Scott Douglas, and Sir William Elliot of Stobbs, both canvassing for the county. Young Harry's the lad for me. Poor Don died of a disease in the heart; the body was opened, which was very right. Odd enough, too, to have a man, probably a friend two days before, slashing at one's heart as it were a bullock's. I had a letter yesterday from John Gibson. The House of Longman and Co. guarantee the sale of Woodstock. Also I made up what was due of my task both for 13th and 14th. So hey for a Swiftianism —

'I loll in my chair,
And around me I stare,
With a critical air,
Like a calf at a fair;
And say I, Mrs. Duty,
Good-morrow to your beauty,
I kiss your sweet shoe-tie,
And hope I can suit ye.'

"Fair words butter no parsnips, says Duty; don't keep talking, then, but go to your work again. Here is a day's task before you—the siege of Toulon.—Call you that a task? d—n me, I'll write it as fast as Boney carried it on.

"April 16.—I am now far a-head with Nap.—Lady Scott seems to make no way. A sad prospect! In the evening a despatch from Lord Melville, written with all the familiarity of former times. I am very glad of it.

"Jedburgh, April 17. - Came over to Jedburgh this morn-

ing, to breakfast with my good old friend Mr. Shortreed, and had my usual warm reception. Lord Gillies held the Circuit Court, and there was no criminal trial for any offence whatever. I have attended these circuits with tolerable regularity since 1792, and though there is seldom much of importance to be done, yet I never remember before the Porteous roll being quite blank. The Judge was presented with a pair of white gloves, in consideration of its being a maiden circuit.

"Received £100 from John Lockhart, for review of Pepys; but this is by far too much — £50 is plenty. Still 'I must impeticos the gratillity'* for the present. Wrote a great many letters. Dined with the Judge, where I met the disappointed candidate, Sir J. S. D., who took my excuse like a gentleman.

"April 18.— This morning I go down to Kelso to poor Don's funeral. It is, I suppose, forty years since I saw him first. I was staying at Sydenham, a lad of fourteen, or by'r Lady some sixteen; and he, a boy of six or seven, was brought to visit me on a pony, a groom holding the leading rein — and now I, an old grey man, am going to lay him in his grave. Sad work. The very road I go, is a road of grave recollections.

"Abbotsford, April 19. — Returned last night from the house of death and mourning to my own, now the habitation of sickness and anxious apprehension. The result cannot yet be judged. — Two melancholy things last night. I left my pallet in our family apartment, to make way for a female attendant, and removed to a dressing-room adjoining, when to return, or whether ever, God only can tell. Also my servant cut my hair, which used to be poor Charlotte's personal task. I hope she will not observe it. The funeral yesterday was very mournful; about fifty persons present, and all seemed affected. The domestics in particular were very much so. Sir Alexander was a kind, though an exact master. It was melancholy to see those apartments, where I have so often

* Twelfth Night, Act II. Scene 3.

seen him play the graceful and kind landlord, filled with those who were to carry him to his long home. There was very little talk of the election, at least till the funeral was over.

"April 20. — Another death; Thomas Riddell, younger of Camiston, serjeant-major of the Edinburgh Troop in the sunny days of our yeomanry, and a very good fellow. — The day was so tempting that I went out with Tom Purdie to cut some trees, the rather that my task was very well advanced. He led me into the wood, as the blind King of Bohemia was led by his four knights into the thick of the battle at Agincourt or Cressy, and then, like the old king, 'I struck good strokes more than one,' which is manly exercise.

"April 24. — Good news from Brighton. Sophia is confined, and both she and her baby are doing well, and the child's name is announced to be Walter — a favourite name in our family, and I trust of no bad omen. Yet it is no charm for life. Of my father's family, I was the second Walter, if not the third. I am glad the name came my way, for it was borne by my father, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather; also by the grandsire of that last-named venerable person, who was the first laird of Raeburn. — Hurst and Robinson, the Yorkshire tykes, have failed, after all their swaggering. But if Woodstock and Napoleon take with the public, I shall care little about their insolvency; and if they do not, I don't think their solvency would have lasted long. Constable is sorely broken down.

'Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart That's sorry yet for thee.'

His conduct has not been what I deserved at his hand; but I believe that, walking blindfold himself, he misled me without malice prepense. It is best to think so at least, until the contrary be demonstrated. To nourish angry passions against a man whom I really liked, would be to lay a blister on my own heart.

"April 27. — This is one of those abominable April mornings which deserve the name of Sans Cullotides, as being cold, beggarly, coarse, savage, and intrusive. The earth lies an inch deep with snow, to the confusion of the worshippers of Flora. It is as imprudent to attach yourself to flowers in Scotland as to a caged bird; the cat, sooner or later, snaps up the one, and these Sans Cullotides annihilate the other. It was but yesterday I was admiring the glorious flourish of the pears and apricots, and now hath come the 'killing frost.' But let it freeze without, we are comfortable within. Lady Scott continues better, and, we may hope, has got the turn of her disease.

"April 28. — Beautiful morning, but ice as thick as pasteboard, too surely showing that the night has made good yesterday's threat. Dalgleish, with his most melancholy face, conveys the most doleful tidings from Bogie. But servants are fond of the woful, it gives such consequence to the person who communicates bad news. Wrote two letters, and read till twelve, and now for a stout walk among the plantations till four. — Found Lady Scott obviously better, I think, than I had left her in the morning. In walking I am like a spavined horse, and heat as I get on. The flourishing plantations around me are a great argument for me to labour hard. 'Barbarus has segetes?' I will write my finger-ends off first.

"April 29.—I was always afraid, privately, that Woodstock would not stand the test. In that case my fate would have been that of the unfortunate minstrel and trumpeter Maclean at the battle of Sheriffmuir—

'Through misfortune he happened to fa', man, But saving his neck His trumpet did break, And came off without music at a', man,'*

* Hogg's Jacobite Relics, vol. ii. p. 5.

- J. B. corroborated my doubts by his raven-like croaking and criticizing; but the good fellow writes me this morning that he is written down an ass, and that the approbation is unanimous. It is but Edinburgh, to be sure; but Edinburgh has always been a harder critic than London. It is a great mercy, and gives encouragement for future exertion. Having written two leaves this morning, I think I will turn out to my walk, though two hours earlier than usual. Egad, I could not persuade myself that it was such bad Balaam,* after all.
- "May 2.—Yesterday was a splendid May-day—to-day seems inclined to be soft, as we call it; but tant mieux. Yesterday had a twang of frost in it. I must get to work and finish Boaden's Life of Kemble, and Kelly's Reminiscences, for the Quarterly.†—I wrote and read for three hours, and then walked, the day being soft and delightful; but, alas, all my walks are lonely from the absence of my poor companion. She does not suffer, thank God—but strength must fail at last. Since Sunday there has been a gradual change—very gradual—but, alas! to the worse. My hopes are almost gone. But I am determined to stand this grief as I have done others.
- "May 4.— On visiting Lady Scott's sick-room this morning I found her suffering, and I doubt if she knew me. Yet, after breakfast, she seemed serene and composed. The worst is, she will not speak out about the symptoms under which she labours. Sad, sad work. I am under the most melancholy apprehension, for what constitution can hold out under these continued and wasting attacks. My niece, Anne Scott, a prudent, sensible, and kind young woman, arrived to-day, having come down to assist us in our distress from so far as

^{*} Balaam is the cant name in a newspaper office for Asinine paragraphs, about monstrous productions of nature and the like, kept standing in type to be used whenever the real news of the day leave an awkward space that must be filled up somehow.

[†] See Miscellaneous Prose Works, (Edin. Ed.) vol. xx. pp. 152-244.

Cheltenham. This is a great consolation. — Henry Scott carries the county without opposition.

"May 6.— The same scene of hopeless (almost) and unavailing anxiety. Still welcoming me with a smile, and asserting she is better. I fear the disease is too deeply entwined with the principles of life. Still labouring at this Review, without heart or spirits to finish it. I am a tolerable Stoic, but preach to myself in vain.

'Are these things then necessities?

Then let us meet them like necessities.'*

"May 7.—Hammered on at the Review till my backbone ached. But I believe it was a nervous affection, for a walk cured it. Sir Adam and the Colonel dined here. So I spent the evening as pleasantly as I well could, considering I am so soon to go like a stranger to the town of which I have been so long a citizen, and leave my wife lingering, without prospect of recovery, under the charge of two poor girls. Talia cogit dura necessitas.

"May 8.—I went over to the election at Jedburgh. There was a numerous meeting; the Whigs, who did not bring ten men to the meeting, of course took the whole matter under their patronage, which was much of a piece with the Blue Bottle drawing the carriage. To see the difference of modern times! We had a good dinner, and excellent wine; and I had ordered my carriage at half-past seven, almost ashamed to start so soon. Everybody dispersed at so early an hour, however, that when Henry had left the chair, there was no carriage for me, and Peter proved his accuracy by showing me it was but a quarter past seven. In the days that I remember, they would have kept it up till day-light; nor do I think poor Don would have left the chair before midnight. Well, there is a medium. Without being a veteran Vice—

* 2d King Henry VI. Act III. Scene 1.

a grey Iniquity, like Falstaff, I think an occasional jolly-bout, if not carried to excess, improved society: men were put into good humour; when the good wine did its good office, the jest, the song, the speech, had double effect; men were happy for the night, and better friends ever after, because they had been so.

" May 11. — 'Der Abschied's tag est da,
Schwer liegt es auf den herzen — schwer.' *

"Charlotte was unable to take leave of me, being in a sound sleep, after a very indifferent night. Perhaps it was as well. Emotion might have hurt her; and nothing I could have expressed would have been worth the risk. I have foreseen, for two years and more, that this menaced event could not be far distant. I have seen plainly, within the last two months, that recovery was hopeless. And yet to part with the companion of twenty-nine years when so very ill that I did not, could not foresee. It withers my heart to think of it, and to recollect that I can hardly hope again to seek confidence and counsel from that ear to which all might be safely confided. But in her present lethargic state, what would my attendance have availed - and Anne has promised close and constant intelligence. I must dine with James Ballantyne to-day en famille. I cannot help it; but would rather be at home and alone. However, I can go out too. I will not yield to the barren sense of hopelessness which struggles to invade me.

"Edinburgh — Mrs. Brown's Lodgings, North St. David Street — May 12. — I passed a pleasant day with kind J. B., which was a great relief from the black dog, which would have worried me at home. He was quite alone.

* This is the opening couplet of a German trooper's song, alluded to, ante, Vol. II. p. 16. The literal translation is —

The day of departure is come, Heavy lies it on the hearts — heavy. "Well, here I am in Arden. And I may say with Touchstone, 'When I was at home I was in a better place;'* I must, when there is occasion, draw to my own Bailie Nicol Jarvie's consolation—'One cannot carry the comforts of the Saut-Market about with one.' Were I at ease in mind, I think the body is very well cared for. Only one other lodger in the house, a Mr. Shandy—a clergyman; and, despite his name, said to be a quiet one.

"May 13. — The projected measure against the Scottish bank-notes has been abandoned. Malachi might clap his wings upon this, but, alas! domestic anxiety has cut his comb. -I think very lightly in general of praise; it costs men nothing, and is usually only lip-salve. Some praise, however, and from some people, does at once delight and strengthen the mind; and I insert in this place the quotation with which Ld. C. Baron Shepherd concluded a letter concerning me to the Chief-Commissioner: - "Magna etiam illa laus, et admirabilis videri solet, tulisse casus sapienter adversos, non fractum esse fortună, retinuisse in rebus asperis dignitatem." † I record these words, not as meriting the high praise they imply, but to remind me that such an opinion being partially entertained of me by a man of a character so eminent, it becomes me to make my conduct approach as much as possible to the standard at which he rates it. - As I must pay some cash in London, I have borrowed from Mr. Alexander Ballantyne the sum of £500. If God should call me before next November, when my note falls due, I request my son Walter will, in reverence to my memory, see that Mr. Alexander Ballantyne does not suffer for having obliged me in a sort of exigency - he cannot afford it, and God has given my son the means to repay him.

"May 14. — A fair good-morrow to you, Mr. Sun, who are shining so brightly on these dull walls. Methinks you look



^{*} As You Like it, Act I. Scene 4.

[†] Cicero, de Orat. ii. 346.

as if you were looking as bright on the banks of the Tweed; but look where you will, Sir Sun, you look upon sorrow and suffering. — Hogg was here yesterday in danger, from having obtained an accommodation of £100 from James Ballantyne, which he is now obliged to repay. I am unable to help the poor fellow, being obliged to borrow myself. But I long ago remonstrated against the transaction at all, and gave him £50 out of my pocket to avoid granting the accommodation, but it did no good.

"May 15. — Received the melancholy intelligence that all is over at Abbotsford.

"Abbotsford, May 16. - She died at nine in the morning, after being very ill for two days - easy at last. I arrived here late last night. Anne is worn out, and has had hysterics, which returned on my arrival. Her broken accents were like those of a child — the language as well as the tones broken, but in the most gentle voice of submission. 'Poor mammanever return again - gone for ever - a better place.' Then, when she came to herself, she spoke with sense, freedom, and strength of mind, till her weakness returned. It would have been inexpressibly moving to me as a stranger - what was it , then to the father and the husband? For myself, I scarce know how I feel --- sometimes as firm as the Bass Rock, sometimes as weak as the water that breaks on it. I am as alert at thinking and deciding as I ever was in my life. Yet, when I contrast what this place now is, with what it has been not long since, I think my heart will break. Lonely, aged, deprived of my family - all but poor Anne; an impoverished, an embarrassed man, deprived of the sharer of my thoughts and counsels, who could always talk down my sense of the calamitous apprehensions which break the heart that must bear them alone. - Even her foibles were of service to me, by giving me things to think of beyond my weary self-reflections.

"I have seen her. The figure I beheld is, and is not, my Charlotte - my thirty years' companion. There is the same symmetry of form, though those limbs are rigid which were once so gracefully elastic - but that yellow masque, with pinched features, which seems to mock life rather than emulate it, can it be the face that was once so full of lively expression? 'I will not look on it again. Anne thinks her little changed, because the latest idea she had formed of her mother is as she appeared under circumstances of extreme pain. back to a period of comparative ease. If I write long in this way, I shall write down my resolution, which I should rather write up if I could. I wonder how I shall do with the large portion of thoughts which were hers for thirty years. I suspect they will be hers yet, for a long time at least. But I will not blaze cambric and crape in the public eye like a disconsolate widower, that most affected of all characters.

"May 17.—Last night Anne, after conversing with apparent ease, dropped suddenly down as she rose from the suppertable, and lay six or seven minutes, as if dead. Clarkson, however, has no fear of these affections.

"May 18. - Another day, and a bright one to the external world, again opens on us; the air soft, and the flowers smiling, and the leaves glittering. They cannot refresh her to whom mild weather was a natural enjoyment. Cerements of lead and of wood already hold her; cold earth must have her soon. But it is not my Charlotte, it is not the bride of my youth, the mother of my children, that will be laid among the ruins of Dryburgh, which we have so often visited in gaiety and pas-She is sentient and conscious of my emotime. No. no. tions somewhere - somehow; where we cannot tell - how we cannot tell; yet would I not at this moment renounce the mysterious yet certain hope that I shall see her in a better world, for all that this world can give me. The necessity of this separation, that necessity which rendered it even a relief, that and patience must be my comfort. I do not experience

those paroxysms of grief which others do on the same occasion. I can exert myself, and speak even cheerfully with the poor girls. But alone, or if anything touches me, — the choking sensation. I have been to her room: there was no voice in it — no stirring; the pressure of the coffin was visible on the bed, but it had been removed elsewhere; all was neat, as she loved it, but all was calm — calm as death. I remembered the last sight of her: she raised herself in bed, and tried to turn her eyes after me, and said, with a sort of smile, 'You all have such melancholy faces.' These were the last words I ever heard her utter, and I hurried away, for she did not seem quite conscious of what she said; when I returned, immediately departing, she was in a deep sleep. It is deeper now. This was but seven days since.

"They are arranging the chamber of death — that which was long the apartment of connubial happiness, and of whose arrangements (better than in richer houses) she was so proud. They are treading fast and thick. For weeks you could have heard a foot-fall. Oh, my God!

"May 19. — Anne, poor love, is ill with her exertions and agitation - cannot walk - and is still hysterical, though less so. I ordered flesh-brush and tepid bath, which I think will bring her about. We speak freely of her whom we have lost, and mix her name with our ordinary conversation. This is the rule of nature. All primitive people speak of their dead, and I think virtuously and wisely. The idea of blotting the names of those who are gone out of the language and familiar discourse of those to whom they were dearest, is one of the rules of ultra-civilization which, in so many instances, strangle natural feeling by way of avoiding a painful sensation. Highlanders speak of their dead children as freely as of their living members; how poor Colin or Robert would have acted in such or such a situation. It is a generous and manly tone of feeling; and so far as it may be adopted without affectation or contradicting the general habits of society, I reckon on observing it.

"May 20.—To-night, I trust, will bring Charles or Lockhart, or both; at least I must hear from them. A letter from Violet Lockhart gave us the painful intelligence that she had not mentioned to Sophia the dangerous state in which her mother was. Most kindly meant, but certainly not so well judged. I have always thought that truth, even when painful, is a great duty on such occasions, and it is seldom that concealment is justifiable. Sophia's baby was christened on Sunday 14th May, at Brighton, by the name of Walter Scott. May God give him life and health to wear it with credit to himself and those belonging to him! Melancholy to think that the next morning after this ceremony deprived him of so near a relation!

"May 21. — Our sad preparations for to-morrow continue. A letter from Lockhart; doubtful if Sophia's health will let him be here. If things permit he comes to-night. From Charles not a word; but I think I may expect him. I wish to-morrow were over; not that I fear it, for my nerves are pretty good, but it will be a day of many recollections.

"May 22.— Charles arrived last night, much affected, of course. Anne had a return of her fainting-fits on seeing him, and again upon seeing Mr. Ramsay,* the gentleman who performs the service. I heard him do so with the utmost propriety for my late friend, Lady Alvanley,† the arrangement of whose funeral devolved upon me. How little I could guess when, where, and with respect to whom, I should next hear those solemn words. Well, I am not apt to shrink from that which is my duty, merely because it is painful; but I wish this day over. A kind of cloud of stupidity hangs about me, as if all were unreal that men seem to be doing and talking about ——



^{*} The Rev. E. B. Ramsay, A. M., St. John's College, Cambridge, — minister of St. John's Chapel, Edinburgh.

[†] Lady Alvanley died at Edinburgh, 17th January 1825 — and was buried in the Chapel of Holyrood. See ante, Vol. III. p. 212.

" May 23. — About an hour before the mournful ceremony of yesterday, Walter arrived, having travelled express from Ireland on receiving the news. He was much affected, poor fellow, and no wonder. Poor Charlotte nursed him, and perhaps for that reason she was over partial to him. The whole scene floats as a sort of dream before me - the beautiful day. the grey ruins covered and hidden among clouds of foliage and flourish, where the grave, even in the lap of beauty, lay lurking, and gaped for its prey. Then the grave looks, the hasty important bustle of men with spades and mattocksthe train of carriages - the coffin containing the creature that was so long the dearest on earth to me, and whom I was to consign to the very spot which in pleasure-parties we so frequently visited. It seems still as if this could not be really so. But it is so — and duty to God and to my children must teach me patience. Poor Anne has had longer fits since our arrival from Dryburgh than before, but vesterday was the crisis. She desired to hear prayers read by Mr. Ramsay, who performed the duty in the most solemn manner. But her strength could not carry it through. She fainted before the service was concluded.

"May 24. — Slept wretchedly, or rather waked wretchedly all night, and was very sick and bilious in consequence, and scarce able to hold up my head with pain. A walk, however, with my sons, did me a deal of good; indeed their society is the greatest support the world can afford me. Their ideas of everything are so just and honourable, kind towards their sisters, and affectionate to me, that I must be grateful to God for sparing them to me, and continue to battle with the world for their sakes, if not for my own.

"May 25.— I had sound sleep to-night, and waked with little or nothing of the strange dreamy feeling which had made me for some days feel like one bewildered in a country where mist or snow has disguised those features of the land-scape which are best known to him.— This evening Walter

left us, being anxious to return to his wife as well as to his regiment.

"May 26. - A rough morning makes me think of St. George's Channel, which Walter must cross to-night or tomorrow to get to Athlone. The wind is almost due east. however, and the Channel at the narrowest point between Portpatrick and Donaghadee. His absence is a great blank in our circle, especially I think to his sister Anne, to whom he shows invariably much kindness. But indeed they do so without exception each towards the other; and in weal or wo. have shown themselves a family of love. I will go to town on Monday and resume my labours. Being now of a grave nature, they cannot go against the general temper of my feelings, and in other respects the exertion, as far as I am concerned, will do me good; besides, I must reëstablish my fortune for the sake of the children, and of my own character. I have not leisure to indulge the disabling and discouraging thoughts that press on me. Were an enemy coming upon my house, would I not do my best to fight, although oppressed in spirits? and shall a similar despondency prevent me from mental exertion? It shall not, by Heaven! This day and to-morrow I give to the currency of the ideas which have of late occupied my mind, and with Monday they shall be mingled at least with other thoughts and cares. - Last night Charles and I walked late on the terrace at Kaeside, when the clouds seemed accumulating in the wildest masses both on the Eildon Hills and other mountains in the distance. rough morning reads the riddle. Dull, drooping, cheerless, has this day been. I cared not carrying my own gloom to the girls, and so sate in my own room, dawdling with old papers. which awakened as many stings as if they had been the nest of fifty scorpions. Then the solitude seemed so absolute my poor Charlotte would have been in the room half a score of times to see if the fire burned, and to ask a hundred kind questions. Well, that is over - and if it cannot be forgotten, must be remembered with patience.

"May 27.—A sleepless night. It is true, I should be up and be doing, and a sleepless night sometimes furnishes good ideas. Alas! I have no companion now with whom I can communicate, to relieve the loneliness of these watches of the night. But I must not fail myself and my family—and the necessity of exertion becomes apparent. I must try a hors d'œuvre—something that can go on between the necessary intervals of Nap. Mrs. Murray Keith's Tale of the Deserter, with her interview with the lad's mother, may be made most affecting, but will hardly endure much expansion.* The frame-work may be a Highland tour, under the guardianship of the sort of postillion whom Mrs. M. K. described to me—a species of conducteur who regulated the motions of his company, made their halts, and was their cicerone.

"May 28.—I wrote a few pages yesterday, and then walked. I believe the description of the old Scottish lady may do, but the change has been unceasingly rung upon Scottish subjects of late, and it strikes me that the introductory matter may be considered as an imitation of Washington Irving—yet not so neither. In short, I will go on. To-day make a dozen of close pages ready, and take J. B.'s advice. I intend the work as an olla podrida, into which any odds and ends of narrative or description may be thrown. I wrote easily. I think the exertion has done me good. I slept sound last night, and at waking, as is usual with me, I found I had some clear views and thoughts upon the subject of this trifling work. I wonder if others find so strongly as I do the truth of the Latin proverb, Aurora musis amica.

"Edinburgh, May 30. — Returned to town last night with Charles. This morning resume ordinary habits of rising early, working in the morning, and attending the Court. All will come easily round. But it is at first as if men looked strange on me, and bite their lip when they wring my hand, and indicated suppressed feelings. It is natural this should be — ua-

* The Highland Widow - Waverley Novels.

doubtedly it has been so with me. Yet it is strange to find one's self resemble a cloud, which darkens gaiety wherever it interposes its chilling shade. Will it be better when, left to my own feelings, I see the whole world pipe and dance around me? I think it will. Their sympathy intrudes on my private affliction. I finished correcting the proofs for the Quarterly: it is but a flimsy article - but then the circumstances were This has been a melancholy day - most most untoward. melancholy. I am afraid poor Charles found me weeping. I do not know what other folks feel, but with me the hysterical passion that impels tears is a terrible violence — a sort of throttling sensation - then succeeded by a state of dreaming stupidity, in which I ask if my poor Charlotte can actually be dead. I think I feel my loss more than at the first blow. Poor Charles wishes to come back to study here when his term ends at Oxford. I can see the motive.

"May 31.— The melancholy horrors of yesterday must not return. To encourage that dreamy state of incapacity is to resign all authority over the mind, and I have been used to say

'My mind to me a kingdom is.' *

I am rightful monarch; and, God to aid, I will not be dethroned by any rebellious passion that may rear its standard against me. Such are morning thoughts, strong as carle-hemp—says Burns—

> 'Come, firm Resolve, take thou the van, Thou stalk of carle-hemp in man.'

Charles went by the steam-boat this morning at six. We parted last night mournfully on both sides. Poor boy, this is his first serious sorrow. Wrote this morning a Memorial on the Claim, which Constable's people prefer as to the copyrights of Woodstock and Napoleon. My argument amounts to this, that being no longer accountable as publishers, they cannot claim the character of such, or assert any right arising out of

* "This excellent philosophical song appears to have been famous in the sixteenth century," &c. — PEROY'S Reliques, vol. i. p. 307.

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the contracts entered into while they held that capacity.— I also finished a few trifling memoranda on a book called the *Omen*, at Blackwood's request."*

* Since these Memoirs were originally published, the Editor has been favoured with a letter to Miss Edgeworth, which seems too valuable to be omitted. The gentleman whose death is alluded to, was an intimate friend of the Edgeworthstown family, and made one of the merry party that met Sir Walter under their roof in August 1825.

" To Miss Edgeworth, &c.

"My Dear Miss Edgeworth, — I had been long meditating writing you a letter, but probably should have paid it off with thinking about it, like the parrot in the show, had not your kind letter, just received, made it an absolute act of ingratitude to suspend my purpose any longer. Woe's me if any of my friends judge of my regard by my regularity as a correspondent; for, partly having much necessarily to write, partly from the gradual but very sensible failure of my eyes, and partly from a touch of original sin which often prevents me from doing the very thing I ought to do, I have become a very unworthy letter writer.

"The circumstances which have given you such friendly anxiety, I am not stoic enough to treat with disregard, but it is not my nature to look upon what can't be helped with any anxious or bitter remembrances. My good fortune, so far as wealth is concerned, was exactly like the motions of the Kings of Brentford,

"Ere a pot of good ale you could swallow, (I mean I, It came with a whoop, and is gone with a hollo." not you.)

The fact is, I belong to that set of philosophers who ought to be called Nymmites, after their great founder Corporal Nym, and the fundamental maxim of whose school is, "things must be as they may"—and so let that matter rest; things past cure should be past care. I trust I shall do well enough, even if the blackening aspect of affairs in this country should bring on further and more wreckful storms, which is not at present at all unlikely. I had plenty of offers, you may believe, of assistance, and poor Jane proffered her whole fortune as if she had been giving a gooseberry. But what I have done foolishly, I will bear the penance of wisely, and take the whole on my own shoulders. Lady Scott is not a person that cares much about fortune, and as for Beatrice, she amuses herself very well with her altered prospects; for with a sort of high persiftage which she never got from me, she has a very generous and independent disposition.

"Abbotsford, 80th April.

This letter was written as far as above, more than two months since; but I have since had great family distress, which, and not the circumstances you allude to, has made me avoid writing, unless where circumstances made it absolutely necessary. Sophia, when expecting soon to be confined, was obliged to go down to Brighton with little Johnnie, whose natural weakness has resolved itself into a complaint in the spine, to cure which the poor child has to lie on his back constantiv. and there was the great risk that he might be called for before Sophia's confinement. Then came her being rather prematurely delivered of an infant whose health was at his birth very precarious. although, thank God, he seems now doing well. To complete this scene of domestic distress, is Lady Scott's bad health, which, though better than it was, is still as precarious as possible. The complaint is of water in her chest, and the remedy is foxglove, which seems a cure rather worse than most diseases; yet she sustains both the disease and remedy to the surprise of medical persons. But - I will not write more about it. - As to my pecuniary loss by Constable, it is not worth mentioning, and we have fair prospects that the business may be weathered without much ultimate loss of any kind. The political letters were merely a whim that took about a day each. Of Woodstock, the best I know is that it has been sold for £8400, instead of £3000, which Constable was to have given me. The people are mad. but that in the present circumstances is their affair, and the publishers do not complain.

"I am deeply sorry for Mr. * * * * * sudden death, and feel much interested for his family. I have scarce seen a man I liked so much on short acquaintance, he had so much good sense, accomplishment, and thorough gentlemanlike manners. Depend on it, I will do what I can for the subscription. I think the book should have been twelve shillings, the usual price of an octavo, and it should be printed well and on good paper. I beg you will immediately put down the following names:—

Copies.	Copies.
Lady Scott of Abbotsford, . 2	8
Miss Scott of Abbotsford, . 1	LieutCol. Fergusson, 1
Charles Scott, Brazen - Nose	William Scott, younger of
College, Oxford, 1	Raeburn, 1
John Lockhart, Esq., Pall Mall,	Captain Walter Scott of Lo-
London, 1	chore, King's Hussars, 1
Mrs. Lockhart, 1	Mrs. Scott of Lochove, . 1
Hugh Scott, Esq. of Harden, 1	Sir W. Scott, 6
Mrs. Scott of Harden, 1	,
·	18
2	

There are names which I will be responsible for, and will remit the money when I get to Edinburgh, as despatch in such cases is always useful. I have no doubt I may pick up a score of names more, if you will send me a subscription list.

"In general, I am resolute in subscribing only for myself, because I cannot think of asking my friends to subscribe to the numerous applications which I do not think myself entitled to decline — but this is a very different question.

"I am concerned to say, I do not think there is the most distant probability of success at Edinburgh in the line Mrs. * * * proposes, though I am happy to think it may answer better in Bath. We are a poor people, and in families of consideration our estates are almost uniformly strictly entailed on heirs-male; therefore the mother has to keep the female chickens under her own wing, and those of good account are generally desirous of bringing them out themselves, and their connexions enable them to do so. Those, again, who are very wealthy, desire sometimes London education for their daughters. In short, there does not exist among us the style of young ladies who can give, for such advantages as I am sure Mrs. * * * would assure them, anything like £200 or £250 a-year. Our eldest sons get our estates, our younger become lawyers, go to India, or enter the army; our girls live at home while mamma can keep house on her jointure get husbands if they can, and if not, do as they can on the interest of £1500 or £2000. The elder brother is in general an honest fellow, but embarrassed with debt; he keeps his sisters in his house if his wife is not cross; and a sort of half family pride, half family affection, carries the thing through. But for paying large pensions, it is not in the nature of things; besides, though a young Englishman or Irishman gets easily into good society in Edinburgh, it is, I think, more difficult for ladies to do so, unless with some strong recommendation - as fortunes, or talents, or accomplishments, or something. In short, I see no hope in that scheme: The melancholy resource of a boardingschool for young ladies might have succeeded, but the rates have been always kept very low at Edinburgh, so as to make it miserable work. My kind love to your brothers and sisters; I hope Mrs. Fox will make you all a lucky present with good fortune to herself. - Walter and Jane have jointly and severally threatened a descent upon Edgeworthstown from Athlone; but they are both really bashful as to doing what they should do, and so Don Whiskerandos and the Lady Tilburina may never accomplish what they themselves consider as grateful and proper. - Kindest regards to Mrs. Edgeworth and Miss Sneyd. -·Always yours, WALTER SCOTT.

"2d May 1826, Abbotsford."



CHAPTER LXXI.

Woodstock — Reception of the Novel — Mrs. Brown's Lodgings — Extract from a Diary of Captain Basil Hall — Buonaparte resumed, and Chronicles of the Canongate begun — Uniform labour during Summer and Autumn — Extracts from Sir Walter's Journal.

JUNE - OCTOBER 1826.

THE price received for Woodstock shows what eager competition had been called forth among the booksellers, when, after the lapse of several years, Constable's monopoly of Sir Walter's novels was abolished by their common calamity. The interest excited, not only in Scotland and England, but all over civilized Europe, by the news of Scott's misfortunes, must also have had its influence in quickening this commercial rivalry. The reader need hardly be told, that the first meeting of James Ballantyne and Company's creditors witnessed the transformation, a month before darkly prophesied, of the "Great Unknown" into the "Too-well-known." Even for those who had long ceased to entertain any doubt as to the main source at least of the Waverley romances, there would have been something stirring in the first confession of the author; but it in fact included the avowal, that he had stood alone in the work of creation; and when the mighty claim came in the same breath with the announcement of personal ruin, the effect on the community of

Edinburgh was electrical. It is, in my opinion, not the least striking feature in the foregoing Diary, that it contains no allusion (save the ominous one of 18th December) to this long withheld revelation. He notes his painful anticipation of returning to the Parliament-House monstrari digito - as an insolvent. It does not seem even to have occurred to him, that when he appeared there the morning after his creditors had heard his confession, there could not be many men in the place but must gaze on his familiar features with a mixture of curiosity, admiration, and sympathy, of which a hero in the moment of victory might have been proud - which might have swelled the heart of a martyr as he was bound to the stake. The universal feeling was, I believe, much what the late amiable and accomplished Earl of Dudley expressed to Mr. Morritt when these news reached them at Brighton. "Scott ruined!" said he - "the author of Waverley ruined! Good God! let every man to whom he has given months of delight give him a sixpence, and he will rise to-morrow morning richer than Rothschild!" It is no wonder that the book, which it was known he

It is no wonder that the book, which it was known he had been writing during this crisis of distress, should have been expected with solicitude. Shall we find him, asked thousands, to have been master truly of his genius in the moment of this ordeal? Shall we trace anything of his own experiences in the construction of his imaginary personages and events?

I know not how others interpreted various passages in Woodstock, but there were not a few that carried deep meaning for such of Scott's own friends as were acquainted with, not his pecuniary misfortune alone, but the drooping health of his wife, and the consolation afforded him by the dutiful devotion of his daughter Anne, in

whose character and demeanour a change had occurred exactly similar to that painted in poor Alice Lee: — "A light joyous air, with something of a humorous expression, which seemed to be looking for amusement, had vanished before the touch of affliction, and a calm melancholy supplied its place, which seemed on the watch to administer comfort to others." In several mottoes, and other scraps of verse, the curious reader will find similar traces of the facts and feelings recorded in the author's Diary.

As to the novel itself, though none can pretend to class it in the very highest rank of his works, since we feel throughout the effects of the great fundamental error. likened by a contemporary critic to that of the writer who should lay his scene at Rome immediately after the battle of Philippi, and introduce Brutus as the survivor in that conflict, and Cicero as his companion in victory: yet even this censor is forced to allow that Woodstock displays certain excellences, not exemplified in all the author's fictions, and which attest, more remarkably than any others could have done, the complete self-possession of the mind when composing it. Its great merit, Mr. Senior thinks, is that it combines an extraordinary variety of incident with perfect unity of action! rest, after condemning, in my view far too broadly, the old Shaksperian Cavalier Sir Henry Lee, he says -

"The Cromwell and Charles II. are inaccurate as portraits, but, as imaginary characters they are admirable. Charles is perhaps somewhat too stiff, and Cromwell too sentimental; but these impressions never struck us till our office forced us to pervert the work from its proper end, and to read for the purpose of criticism instead of enjoyment. We are not sure, however, that we do not prefer Tomkins to either of them; his cunning, profligacy, hypocrisy, and enthusiasm, are com-

bined into a character as spirited as it is original. Wildrake, Rochecliffe, Desborough, Holdenough, and Bletson, are composed of fewer materials, and therefore exhibit less power in the author; but they are natural and forcible, particularly Holdenough. There are few subjects which Sir Walter seems more to delight in painting than the meliorating influence of religious feelings on an imperfect temper, even though somewhat alloyed by superstition and enthusiasm. — Woodstock is a picture full of false costume and incorrect design, but splendidly grouped and coloured; and we enty those whose imperfect knowledge of the real events has enabled them to enjoy its beauties without being offended by its inaccuracies."

There is one character of considerable importance which the reviewer does not allude to. If he had happened to have the slightest tincture of his author's fondness for dogs, he would not have failed to say something of the elaborate and affectionate portraiture of old Maida, under the name of Bevis.

The success of this novel was great: large as the price was, its publishers had no reason to repent their bargain; and of course the rapid receipt of such a sum as £8000, the product of hardly three months' labour, highly gratified the body of creditors, whose debtor had devoted to them whatever labour his health should henceforth permit him to perform. We have seen that he very soon began another work of fiction; and it will appear that he from the first designed the "Chronicles of the Canongate" to be published by Mr. Robert Cadell. That gentleman's connexion with Constable was, from circumstances of which the reader may have traced various little indications, not likely to be renewed after the catastrophe of their old copartnership. They were now endeavouring to establish themselves in separate busi-

nesses; and each was, of course, eager to secure the countenance of Sir Walter. He did not hesitate a moment. He conceived that Constable had acted in such a manner by him, especially in urging him to borrow large sums of money for his support after all chance of recovery was over, that he had more than forfeited all claims on his confidence; and Mr. Cadell's frank conduct in warning Ballantyne and him against Constable's last mad proposal about a guarantee for £20,000, had produced a strong impression in his favour.

Sir Walter's Diary has given us some pleasing glimpses of the kind of feeling displayed by Ballantyne towards him, and by him towards Ballantyne, during these dark months. In justice to both, I shall here insert one of the notes addressed by Scott, while Woodstock was at press, to his critical typographer. It has reference to a request, that the success of Malachi Malagrowther might be followed up by a set of essays on Irish Absenteeism in the Edinburgh Weekly Journal; - the editorship of which paper, with the literary management of the printing-house, had been continued to Mr. Ballantyne, upon a moderate salary, by his creditors' trustees. I may observe, that when the general superintendence of the printing-house came into the hands of regular men of business, it was found (notwithstanding the loss of Constable's great employment) a lucrative one: the creditors, after paying James his salary, cleared in one year £1200 from the concern, which had for many before been a source of nothing but perplexity to its founders. No hints of mutual complaint or recrimination ever dropt from either of the fallen partners. The printer, like Scott, submitted without a murmur of that sort, or indeed of any sort, to his reverses: he withdrew

to a very small house in a sequestered suburban situation, and altered all his domestic habits and arrangements with decision and fortitude. Here he received many communications such as the following:—

" To Mr. James Ballantyne.

" North St. David Street.

"Dear James, —I cannot see to read my manuscript in the way you propose — I would give a thousand pounds I could; but, like the officer of the Customs, when the Board desired him to read a coquet of his own, —I am coquet-writer, not coquet-reader — and you must be thankful that I can perform even that part of the duty.

"We must in some sort stand or fall together; and I do not wish you to think that I am forgetting your interest in my own—though I sincerely believe the former is what you least think of. But I am afraid I must decline the political task you invite me to. It would cost me a fortnight's hard work to do anything to purpose, for I have no information on the subject whatever. In short, as the Earl of Essex said on a certain occasion, 'Frankly, it may not be, I hope next winter will afford me an opportunity to do something, which, as Falstaff says, "may do you good." — Ever yours, W. S."

The date of this note (North St. David Street) reminds me of a passage in Captain Basil Hall's Diary. He called at Mrs. Brown's lodging-house one morning—and on his return home wrote as follows:—

"A hundred and fifty years hence, when his works have become old classical authorities, it may interest some fervent lover of his writings to know what this great genius was about on Saturday the 10th of June 1826 — five months after the total ruin of his pecuniary fortunes, and twenty-six days after the death of his wife.

"In the days of his good luck he used to live at No. 39 in North Castle Street, in a house befitting a rich baronet; but on reaching the door, I found the plate on it covered with rust (so soon is glory obscured), the windows shuttered up, dusty, and comfortless; and from the side of one projected a board, with this inscription, "To Sell;" the stairs were unwashed, and not a footmark told of the ancient hospitality which reigned within. In all nations with which I am acquainted, the fashionable world move westward, in imitation, perhaps, of the great tide of civilization; and, vice versa, those persons who decline in fortune, which is mostly equivalent to declining in fashion, shape their course eastward. Accordingly, by an involuntary impulse, I turned my head that way, and inquiring at the clubs in Prince's Street, learned that he now resided in St. David Street, No. 6.

"I was rather glad to recognise my old friend the Abbotsford butler, who answered the door :-- the saving about heroes and valets-de-chambre comes to one's recollection on such occasions, and nothing, we may be sure, is more likely to be satisfactory to a man whose fortune is reduced than the stanch adherence of a mere servant, whose wages must be altered for the worse. At the top of the stair we saw a small tray, with a single plate and glasses for one solitary person's dinner. Some few months ago Sir Walter was surrounded by his family, and wherever he moved, his head-quarters were the focus of fashion. Travellers from all nations crowded round, and, like the recorded honours of Lord Chatham, 'thickened over him.' Lady and Miss Scott were his constant companions; the Lockharts were his neighbours both in town and in Roxburghshire; his eldest son was his frequent guest; and in short, what with his own family and the clouds of tourists, who, like so many hordes of Cossacks, pressed upon him, there was not, perhaps, out of a palace, any man so attended - I had almost said overpowered, by company. His wife is now dead --- his son-in-law and favourite daughter gone to London - and his grandchild, I fear, just staggering, poor little fellow, on the edge of the grave, which, perhaps, is the securest refuge for him - his eldest son is married, and at a distance, and report speaks of no probability of the title descending; in short, all are dispersed, and the tourists, those 'curiosos impertinentes,' drive past Abbotsford gate, and curse their folly in having delayed for a year too late their long-projected jaunt to the north. Meanwhile, not to mince the matter, the great man had, somehow or other, managed to involve himself with printers, publishers, bankers, gas-makers, wool-staplers, and all the fraternity of speculators, accommodation-bill manufacturers, land-jobbers, and so on, till, at a season of distrust in money matters, the hour of reckoning came, like a thief in the night; and as our friend, like the unthrifty virgins, had no oil in his lamp, all his affairs went to wreck and ruin, and landed him, after the gale was over, in the predicament of Robinson Crusoe, with little more than a shirt to his back. But like that able navigator, he is not cast away upon a barren rock. The tide has ebbed, indeed, and left him on the beach, but the hull of his fortunes is above water still, and it will go hard indeed with him if he does not shape a raft that shall bring to shore much of the cargo that an ordinary mind would leave in despair to be swept away by the next change of the moon. The distinction between man and the rest of the living creation, certainly, is in nothing more remarkable, than in the power which he possesses over them, of turning to varied account the means with which the world is stocked. But it has always struck me, that there is a far greater distinction between man and man than between many men and most other animals; and it is from a familiarity with the practical operation of this marvellous difference that I venture to predict. that our Crusoe will cultivate his own island, and build himself a bark in which, in process of time, he will sail back to his friends and fortune in greater triumph than if he had never been driven amongst the breakers.

"Sir Walter Scott, then, was sitting at a writing-desk covered with papers, and on the top was a pile of bound volumes of the Moniteur, — one, which he was leaning over as my brother and I entered, was open on a chair, and two others

were lying on the floor. As he rose to receive us, he closed the volume which he had been extracting from, and came forward to shake hands. He was, of course, in deep mourning, with weepers and the other trappings of woe, but his countenance, though certainly a little woe-begonish, was not cast into any very deep furrows. His tone and manner were as friendly as heretofore, and when he saw that we had no intention of making any attempt at sympathy or moanification, but spoke to him as of old, he gradually contracted the length of his countenance, and allowed the corners of his mouth to curl almost imperceptibly upwards, and a renewed lustre came into his eye, if not exactly indicative of cheerfulness, at all events of well-regulated, patient, Christian resignation: My meaning will be misunderstood if it be imagined from this picture that I suspected any hypocrisy, or an affectation of grief in the first instance. I have no doubt, indeed, that he feels, and most acutely, the bereavements which have come upon him; but we may very fairly suppose, that among the many visiters he must have, there may be some who cannot understand that it is proper, decent, or even possible, to hide those finer emotions deep in the heart. - He immediately began conversing in his usual style — the chief topic being Captain Denham (whom I had recently seen in London), and his book of African Travels, which Sir Walter had evidently read with much attention. * * * * After sitting a quarter of an hour, we came away, well pleased to see our friend quite unbroken in spirit — and though bowed down a little by the blast, and here and there a branch the less, as sturdy in the trunk as ever, and very possibly all the better for the discipline - better, I mean, for the public, inasmuch as he has now a vast additional stimulus for exertion - and one which all the world must admit to be thoroughly noble and generous."

A week before this visit took place, Sir Walter had sufficiently mastered himself to resume his literary tasks; and he thenceforth worked with determined resolution on the Life of Napoleon, interlaying a day or two of the

Chronicles of the Canongate, whenever he had got before the press with his historical MS., or felt the want of the only repose he ever cared for — a change of labour. In resuming his own Diary, I shall make extracts rather less largely than before, because many entries merely reflect the life of painful exertion to which he had now submitted himself, without giving us any interesting glimpses either of his feelings or opinions. I hope I have kept enough to satisfy all proper curiosity on these last points.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY - JUNE 1826.

" Edinburgh, June 4. - I wrote a good task yesterday, and to-day a great one, scarce stirring from the desk. I am not sure that it is right to work so hard; but a man must take himself, as well as other people, when in the humour. doubt if men of method, who can lay aside or take up the pen just at the hours appointed, will ever be better than poor creatures. Lady Louisa Stuart used to tell me of Mr. Hoole. the translator of Tasso and Ariosto, and in that capacity a noble transmuter of gold into lead, that he was a clerk in the India-House, with long ruffles and a snuff-coloured suit of clothes, who occasionally visited her father, John Earl of Bute. She sometimes conversed with him, and was amused to find that he did exactly so many couplets day by day, neither more nor less; and habit had made it light to him, however heavy it might seem to the reader. Well, but if I lay down the pen, as the pain in my breast hints that I should, what am I to do? If I think, why I shall weep - and that's nonsense; and I have no friend now - none - to relieve my tediousness for half-an-hour of the gloaming. Let me be grateful - I have good news from Abbotsford.

"June 7. — Again a day of hard work — busy at half-past



eight. I went to the Dean of Faculty's to a consultation about Constable,* and sat with said Dean and Mr. J. S. More and J. Gibson. I find they have as high hope of success as lawyers ought to express; and I think I know how our profession speak when sincere; but I cannot interest myself deeply in it. When I had come home from such a business, I used to carry the news to poor Charlotte, who dressed her face in sadness or mirth as she saw the news affect me: this hangs lightly about me. I had almost forgot the appointment, if J. G. had not sent me a card. I passed a piper in the street as I went to the Dean's and could not help giving him a shilling to play Pibroch a Donuil Dhu for luck's sake: — what a child I am!

"June 8.— Bilious and headach this morning. A dog howl'd all night and left me little sleep:—poor cur! I dare say he had his distresses, as I have mine. I was obliged to make Dalgleish shut the windows when he appeared at half-past six, as usual, and did not rise till nine. I have often deserved a headach in my younger days without having one, and Nature is, I suppose, paying off old scores. Ay—but then the want of the affectionate care that used to be ready, with lowered voice and stealthy pace, to smooth the pillow and offer condolence and assistance,—gone—gone—for ever—ever—ever. Well, there is another world, and we'll meet free from the mortal sorrows and frailties which beset us here:—amen, so be it. Let me change the topic with hand and head, and the heart must fellow. I finished four pages to-day, headach, laziness, and all.

"June 9. — Corrected a stubborn proof this morning. These battles have been the death of many a man — I think they will be mine. Well, but it clears to windward; so we will fag on. Slept well last night. By the way, how intolerably selfish this

* This alludes to the claim advanced by the creditors of Constable and Co. to the copyright of Woodstock and the Life of Napoleon. The Dean of the Faculty of Advocates was at this time Mr. Cranstoun, now Lord Corehouse. — [1839.]



Journal makes me seem — so much attention to one's naturals and non-naturals? Lord Mackenzie * called, and we had much chat about parish business. - The late regulations for preparing cases in the Outer-House do not work well. effect of running causes faster through the Courts below is, that they go by scores to appeal, and Lord Gifford has hitherto decided them with such judgment, and so much rapidity, as to give great satisfaction. The consequence will in time be, that the Scottish Supreme Court will be in effect situated in London. Then down fall, as national objects of respect and veneration, the Scottish Bench, the Scottish Bar, the Scottish Law herself, and - and - 'Here is an end of an auld sang.'t Were I as I have been, I would fight kneedeep in blood ere it came to that. I shall always be proud of Malachi as having headed back the Southron, or helped to do so in one instance at least.

"June 11. — Bad dreams. Woke, thinking my old and inseparable friend beside me; and it was only when I was fully awake that I could persuade myself that she was dark, low, and distant, and that my bed was widowed. I believe the phenomena of dreaming are in a great measure occasioned by the double touch which takes place when one hand is crossed in sleep upon another. Each gives and receives the impression of touch to and from the other, and this complicated sensation our sleeping fancy ascribes to the agency of another being, when it is in fact produced by our own limbs rolling on each other. Well, here goes — incumbite remis.

"June 12. — Finished volume third of Napoleon. I resumed it on the 1st of June, the earliest period that I could bend my mind to it after my great loss. Since that time I have lived, to be sure, the life of a hermit, except attending the Court five days in the week for about three hours on an

^{*} The eldest son of the Man of Feeling.

[†] Speech of Lord Chancellor Seafield on the ratification of the Scotch Union. — See Tales of a Grandfather, chap. lx.

average. Except at that time, I have been reading or writing on the subject of Boney, and have finished last night, and sent to printer this morning, the last sheet of fifty-two written since 1st June. It is an awful screed; but grief makes me a house-keeper, and to labour is my only resource.

"June 14. — To-day I began with a page and a half before breakfast. This is always the best way. You stand like a child going to be bathed, shivering and shaking till the first pitcherful is flung about your ears, and then are as blythe as a water-wagtail. I am just come home from Court; and now, my friend Nap, have at you with a downright blow! Methinks I would fain make peace with my conscience by doing six pages to-night. Bought a little bit of Gruyere cheese, instead of our dame's choke-dog concern. When did I ever purchase anything for my own eating? But I will say no more of that. And now to the bread-mill —

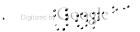
"June 16.— Yesterday safe in the Court till nearly four. I had, of course, only time for my task. I fear I shall have little more to-day, for I have accepted to dine at Hector's. I got, yesterday, a present of two engravings from Sir Henry Raeburn's portrait of me, which (poor fellow!) was the last he ever painted, and certainly not the worst.* I had the pleasure to give one to young Davidoff for his uncle, the celebrated Black Captain of the campaign of 1812. Curious that he should be interested in getting the resemblance of a person whose mode of attaining some distinction has been very different. But I am sensible, that if there be anything good about my poetry or prose either, it is a hurried frankness of composition, which pleases soldiers, sailors, and young people of bold and active disposition. I have been no sigher in shades—no writer of

'Songs and sonnets and rustical roundelays, Framed on fancies, and whistled on reeds.' †

> * See ante, Vol. VI. p. 193. † Song of The Hunting of the Hare.

VOL. VIII.

7



"Abbotsford, Saturday, June 17.— Left Edinburgh to-day, after Parliament-House. My two girls met me at Torsonce, which was a pleasant surprise, and we returned in the sociable all together. Found everything right and well at Abbotsford under the new regime. I again took possession of the family bed-room and my widowed couch. This was a sore trial, but it was necessary not to blink such a resolution. Indeed, I do not like to have it thought that there is any way in which I can be beaten.*

"June 19. — This morning wrote till half twelve — good day's work — at Canongate Chronicles. Methinks I can make this answer. Then drove to Huntly Burn, and called at Chiefswood. Walked home. The country crying for rain; yet, on the whole, the weather delicious, dry and warm, with a fine air of wind. The young woods are rising in a kind of profusion I never saw elsewhere. Let me once clear off these incumbrances, and they shall wave broader and deeper yet.

"June 21.— For a party of pleasure, I have attended to business well. Twenty pages of Croftangry, five printed pages each, attest my diligence, and I have had a delightful variation by the company of the two Annes. Regulated my little expenses here.

"Edinburgh, June 22.—Returned to my Patmos. Heard good news from Lockhart. Wife well, and John Hugh better. He mentions poor Southey testifying much interest for me, even to tears. It is odd—am I so hard-hearted a man? I could not have wept for him, though in distress I would have gone any length to serve him. I sometimes think I do not deserve people's good opinion, for certainly my feelings are

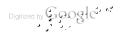
* This entry reminds me of Hannah More's account of Mrs. Garrick's conduct after her husband's funeral. "She told me," says Mrs. More, "that she prayed with great composure, then went and kissed the dear bed, and got into it with a sad pleasure."—See Memoirs of Mrs. More, vol. i. p. 135.

rather guided by reflection than impulse. But everybody has his own mode of expressing interest, and mine is stoical even in bitterest grief. I hope I am not the worse for wanting the tenderness that I see others possess, and which is so amiable. I think it does not cool my wish to be of use when I can. But the truth is, I am better at enduring or acting, than at consoling. From childhood's earliest hour, my heart rebelled against the influence of external circumstances in myself and others - non est tanti! To-day, I was detained in the Court from half-past ten till near four, vet I finished and sent off a packet to Cadell, which will finish one-third of the Chronicles, vol. 1st. Henry Scott came in while I was at dinner, and sat while I eat my beef-steak. A gourmand would think me much at a loss, coming back to my ploughman's meal of boiled beef and Scotch broth, from the rather récherché table at Abbotsford, but I have no philosophy in my carelessness on that score. is natural, though I am no ascetic, as my father was.

"June 23.—I received to-day £10 from Blackwood for the article on The Omen. Time was I would not have taken these small tithes of mint and cummin, but scornful dogs will eat dirty puddings, and I, with many depending on me, must do the best I can with my time; God help me.

"Blair-Adam, June 24.— Left Edinburgh yesterday after the Court, and came over here with the Lord Chief-Baron and William Clerk, to spend as usual a day or two at the Chief-Commissioner's. His Lordship's family misfortunes and my own make our holiday this year of a more quiet description than usual, and a sensible degree of melancholy hangs on the re-union of our party. It was wise, however, not to omit it; for to slacken your hold on life in any agreeable point of connexion, is the sooner to reduce yourself to the indifference and passive vegetation of old age.

"June 25. — Another melting day: — we have lounged away the morning, creeping about the place, sitting a great



deal, and walking as little as might be, on account of the heat. Blair-Adam has been successively in possession of three generations of persons attached to and skilled in the art of embellishment, and may be fairly taken as a place where art and taste have done a great deal to improve nature. A long ridge of varied ground sloping to the foot of Benarty, and which originally was of a bare, mossy, boggy character, has been clothed by the son, father, and grandfather; while the undulations and hollows, which seventy or eighty years since must have looked only like wrinkles in the black morasses, being now drained and lined, are skirted with deep woods, particularly of spruce, which thrives wonderfully, and covered with excellent grass. We drove in the droskie, and walked in the evening.

"June 26. - Another day of unmitigated heat; thermometer 82°: must be higher in Edinburgh, where I return to-night, when the decline of the sun makes travelling prac-It will be well for my works to be there - not quite so well for me: there is a difference between the clever nice arrangement of Blair-Adam and Mrs. Brown's accommodations, though he who is insured against worse has no right to complain of them. But the studious neatness of poor Charlotte has perhaps made me fastidious. She loved to see things clean, even to Oriental scrupulosity. So oddly do our deep recollections of other kinds correspond with the most petty occurrences of our life. Lord Chief-Baron told us a story of the ruling passion strong in death. A Mr. * * *, a Master in Chancery, was on his deathbed - a very wealthy man. Some occasion of great urgency occurred in which it was necessary to make an affidavit, and the attorney, missing one or two other Masters whom he enquired after, ventured to ask if Mr. * * * * would be able to receive the deposition. The proposal seemed to give him momentary strength; his clerk was sent for, and the oath taken in due form. The Master was lifted up in bed, and with difficulty subscribed the paper; as he sank down again, he made a signal to his clerk -



'Wallace.' -- 'Sir?' -- 'Your ear -- lower -- lower. Have you got the half-crown?' He was dead before morning.

"Edinburgh, June 27. — Returned to Edinburgh late last night, and had a most sweltering night of it. This day also cruel hot. However, I made a task, or nearly so, and read a good deal about the Egyptian expedition. I have also corrected proofs, and prepared for a great start, by filling myself with facts and ideas.

"June 29. — I walked out for an hour last night, and made one or two calls — the evening was delightful —

'Day her sultry fires had wasted,
. Calm and sweet the moonlight rose;
Even a captive spirit tasted
Half oblivion of his woes.'*

I wonder often how Tom Campbell, with so much real genius, has not maintained a greater figure in the public eye than he has done of late. The Magazine seems to have paralyzed him. The author, not only of the Pleasures of Hope, but of Hohenlinden, Lochiel, &c., should have been at the very top of the tree. Somehow he wants audacity, fears the public, and what is worse, fears the shadow of his own reputation. He is a great corrector too, which succeeds as ill in composition as in education. Many a clever boy is flogged into a dunce, and many an original composition corrected into mediocrity. Tom ought to have done a great deal more: his youthful promise was great. John Leyden introduced me to him. They afterwards quarrelled. When I repeated Hohenlinden to Leyden, he said - Dash it, man, tell the fellow that I hate him; - but, dash him, he has written the finest verses that have been published these fifty years.' I did mine errand as faithfully as one of Homer's messengers, and had for answer - 'Tell Levden that I detest him, but I know the value of his critical approbation.' This feud was therefore in the way of being

• Campbell's Turkish Lady. The poet was then Editor of the New Monthly Magazine, but he soon gave it up.

taken up. 'When Leyden comes back from India,' said Tom Campbell, 'what cannibals he will have eaten, and what tigers he will have torn to pieces!'

"Gave a poor poetess £1. Gibson writes me that £2300 is offered for the poor house; it is worth £300 more, but I will not oppose my own opinion and convenience to good and well-meant counsel: so farewell, poor No. 39. What a portion of my life has been spent there! It has sheltered me, from the prime of life to its decline; and now I must bid good-by to it. I have bid good-by to my poor wife, so long its courteous and kind mistress — and I need not care about the empty rooms; yet it gives me a turn. Never mind; all in the day's work.

"June 30.— Here is another dreadful warm day, fit for nobody but the flies. I was detained in Court till four; dreadfully close, and obliged to drink water for refreshment, which formerly I used to scorn, even in the moors, with a burning August sun, the heat of exercise, and a hundred springs gushing around me. Corrected proofs, &c. on my return.

"Abbotsford, July 2.— I worked a little this morning, then had a long and warm walk. Captain and Mrs. Hamilton, from Chiefswood, the present inhabitants of Lockhart's cottage, dined with us, which made the evening pleasant. He is a fine soldierly-looking man*—his wife a sweet good-humoured little woman. Since we were to lose the Lockharts, we could scarce have had more agreeable neighbours.

* Thomas Hamilton, Esq. — the author of Cyril Thornton — Men and Manners of America — Annals of the Peninsular Campaigns, &c. &c.

gers in distress, and I have half a mind to turn sharp round on some of my consolers.

"July 8. - Wrote a good task this morning. I may be mistaken; but I do think the tale of Elspat M'Tavish * in my bettermost manner - but J. B. roars for chivalry. He does not quite understand that everything may be overdone in this world, or sufficiently estimate the necessity of novelty. The Highlanders have been off the field now for some time. -Returning from the Court, looked into a fine show of wild beasts, and saw Nero the great lion, whom they had the brutal cruelty to bait with bull-dogs, against whom the noble creature disdained to exert his strength. He was lying like a prince in a large cage, where you might be admitted if you wished. I had a month's mind — but was afraid of the newspapers. I could be afraid of nothing else, for never did a creature seem more gentle and yet majestic. I longed to caress him. Wallace, the other lion, born in Scotland, seemed much less trust-He handled the dogs as his namesake did the worthy. southron.

"July 10. - Dined with John Swinton en famille. He told me an odd circumstance. Coming from Berwickshire in the mail-coach, he met with a passenger who seemed more like a military man than anything else. They talked on all sorts of subjects, at length on politics. Malachi's letters were mentioned, when the stranger observed they were much more seditious than some expressions for which he had three or four years ago been nearly sent to Botany Bay. And perceiving John Swinton's surprise at this avowal, he added, 'I am Kin-This gentleman had got engaged in the loch of Kinloch.' Radical business (the only real gentleman, by the way, who did), and harangued the weavers of Dundee with such emphasis, that he would have been tried and sent to Botany Bay. had he not fled abroad. He was outlawed, and only restored to his estates on a composition with Government. It seems to

* The Highland Widow.



have escaped Mr. Kinloch, that the man who places a lighted coal in the middle of combustibles and upon the floor, acts a little differently from him who places the same quantity of burning fuel in a fire-grate.

"July 13. - Dined yesterday with Lord Abercromby at a party he gave to Lord Melville and some old friends, who formed the Contemporary Club. Lord M. and I met with considerable feeling on both sides, and all our feuds were forgotten and forgiven; I conclude so at least, because one or two people, whom I know to be sharp observers of the weather-glass on occasion of such squalls, have been earnest with me to meet him at parties - which I am well assured they would not have been (had I been Horace come to life again) were they not sure the breeze was over. For myself, I am happy that our usual state of friendship should be restored, though I could not have come down proud stomach to make advances. which is, among friends, always the duty of the richer and more powerful of the two. To-day I leave Mrs. Brown's lodgings. I have done a monstrous sight of work here, notwithstanding the indolence of this last week, which must and shall be amended.

So good-by. Mrs. Brown,
I am going out of town,
Over dale, over down,
Where bugs bite not,
Where below you chairnen drink not,
Where below you chairnen drink not,
Where beside you gutters stink not;
But all is fresh, and clear, and gay,
And merry lambkins sport and play;
And they toss with rakes uncommonly short hay,
Which looks as if it had been sown only the other day,
And where oats are at twenty-five shillings a-boll, they say,
But all's one for that, since I must and will away.

"July 14, Abbotsford. — Anybody would think, from the fal-de-ral conclusion of my journal of yesterday, that I left

town in a very gay humour—cujus contrarium verum est. But nature has given me a kind of buoyancy—I know not what to call it—that mingled even with my deepest afflictions and most gloomy hours. I have a secret pride—I fancy it will be so most truly termed—which impels me to mix with my distresses strange snatches of mirth 'which have no mirth in them.'

"July 16. — Sleepy, stupid, indolent — finished arranging the books, and after that was totally useless — unless it can be called study that I slumbered for three or four hours over a variorum edition of the Gill's-Hill tragedy.* Admirable escape for low spirits — for, not to mention the brutality of so extraordinary a murder, it led John Bull into one of his most uncommon fits of gambols, until at last he became so maudlin as to weep for the pitiless assassin, Thurtell, and treasure up the leaves and twigs of the hedge and shrubs in the fatal garden as valuable relics, nay, thronged the minor theatres to see the roan horse and yellow gig in which his victim was transported from one house to the other. I have not stept over the threshold to-day, so very stupid have I been.

"July 17. — Desidiæ tandem valedixi. — Our time is like our money. When we change a guinea, the shillings escape as things of small account; when we break a day by idleness in the morning, the rest of the hours lose their importance in our eye. I set stoutly about seven this morning to Boney —

And long ere dinner time, I have Full eight close pages wrote; What, Duty, hast thou now to crave? Well done, Sir Walter Scott!

* The murder of Weare by Thurtell and Co. at Gill's-Hill, in Hertfordshire. Sir Walter collected printed trials with great assiduity, and took care always to have the contemporary ballads and prints bound up with them. He admired particularly this verse of Mr. Hook's broadside—

"They cut his throat from ear to ear,
His brains they battered in;
His name was Mr. William Weare,
He dwelt in Lyon's Inn."

"July 21. - To Mertoun. Lord and Lady Minto and several other guests were there, besides their own large family. So my lodging was a little room which I had not occupied since I was a bachelor, but often before in my frequent intercourse with this kind and hospitable family. Feeling myself returned to that celibacy which renders many accommodations indifferent which but lately were indispensable, my imagination drew a melancholy contrast between the young man entering the world on fire for fame, and busied in imagining means of coming by it, and the aged widower, blase on the point of literary reputation, deprived of the social comforts of a married state, and looking back to regret instead of looking forward to hope. This brought bad sleep and unpleasing dreams. But if I cannot hope to be what I have been, I will not, if I can help it, suffer vain repining to make me worse than I may be. We left Mertoun after breakfast, and the two Annes and I visited Lady Raeburn at Lessudden. My aunt is now in her ninetieth year - so clean, so nice, so well arranged in every respect, that it makes old age lovely. She talks both of late and former events with perfect possession of her faculties, and has only failed in her limbs. A great deal of kind feeling has survived, in spite of the frost of years. Home to dinner, and worked all the afternoon among the Moniteurs - to little purpose, for my principal acquisition was a headach.

"July 24. — At dinner-time to-day came Dr. Jamieson* of the Scottish Dictionary — an excellent good man, and full of auld Scottish cracks, which amuse me well enough, but are caviare to the young people.

"July 26. — This day went to Selkirk, to hold a court. The Doctor chose to go with me. Action and reaction — Scots proverb — 'The unrest (i. e. pendulum) of a clock gangs are as far the ae gait as the t' other.'

* The venerable lexicographer often had lodgings near Abbotsford in the angling season, being still very fond of that sport. [Dr. Jamieson died 12th July 1838, aged eighty-one.]

"July 27. — Up and at it this morning, and finished four pages. An unpleasant letter from London, as if I might be troubled by some of the creditors there, if I should go up to get materials for Nap. I have no wish to go — none at all. I would even like to put off my visit, so far as John Lockhart and my daughter are concerned, and see them when the meeting could be more pleasant. But then, having an offer to see the correspondence from St. Helena, I can make no doubt that I ought to go. However, if it is to infer any danger to my personal freedom, English wind shall not blow on me. It is monstrous hard to prevent me doing what is certainly the best for all parties.

"July 28. — I am wellnigh choked with the sulphurous heat of the weather — and my hand is as nervous as a paralytic's. Read through and corrected Saint Ronan's Well. I am no judge, but I think the language of this piece rather good. Then I must allow the fashionable portraits are not the true thing. I am too much out of the way. The story is horribly contorted and unnatural, and the catastrophe is melancholy, which should always be avoided. No matter; I have corrected it for the press.* Walter's account of his various quarters per last despatch. Query, if original:—

'Loughrin is a blackguard place,
To Gort I give my curse;
Athlone itself is bad enough,
But Ballinrobe is worse.
I cannot tell which is the worst,
They're all so very bad;
But of all towns I ever saw,
Bad luck to Kinnegad.'

"August 1.— Yesterday evening I took to arranging old plays, and scrambled through two: one, called Michaelmas Term, full of traits of manners; and another a sort of bouncing tragedy, called the Hector of Germany, or the Palsgrave.

* This Novel was passing through the press in 8vo., 12mo., and 18mo., to complete collective editions in these sizes.

The last, worthless in the extreme, is like many of the plays in the beginning of the seventeenth century, written to a good tune. The dramatic poets of that time seem to have possessed as joint-stock a highly poetical and abstract tone of language, so that the worst of them remind you of the very best. The audience must have had a much stronger sense of poetry in those days than in ours, since language was received and applauded at the Fortune or the Red Bull, which could not now be understood by any general audience in Great Britain. Now to work.

- "August 2.—I finished before dinner five leaves, and I would crow a little about it, but here comes Duty like an old housekeeper to an idle chambermaid. Hear her very words—
- "Duty. Oh! you crow, do you? Pray, can you deny that your sitting so quiet at work was owing to its raining heavily all the forenoon, and indeed till dinner-time, so that nothing would have stirred out that could help it, save a duck or a goose? I trow, if it had been a fine day, by noon there would have been aching of the head, throbbing, shaking, and so forth, to make an apology for going out.
- "Egomet Ipse. And whose head ever throbbed to go out when it rained, Mrs. Duty?
- "Duty. Answer not to me with a fool-born jest, as your friend Erskine used to say to you when you escaped from his good advice under the fire of some silly pun. You smoke a cigar after dinner, and I never check you drink tea, too, which is loss of time; and then, instead of writing me one other page, or correcting those you have written out, you rollock into the woods till you have not a dry thread about you; and here you sit writing down my words in your foolish journal instead of minding my advice.
- "Ego. Why, Mrs. Duty, I would as gladly be friends with you as Crabbe's tradesman fellow with his conscience; but you should have some consideration with human frailty.
 - "Duty. Reckon not on that. But, however, good-night for
 - * See Crabbe's Tale of The Struggles of Conscience.

the present. I would recommend to you to think no thoughts in which I am not mingled — to read no books in which I have no concern — to write three sheets of botheration all the six days of the week per diem, and on the seventh to send them to the printer. Thus advising, I heartily bid you farewell.

"Ego. Farewell, madam (exit DUTY) — and be d—d to ye for an unreasonable bitch! 'The devil must be in this greedy gled!' as the Earl of Angus said to his hawk; 'will she never be satisfied?'*

"August 3.— Wrote half a task in the morning. From eleven till half-past eight in Selkirk taking precognitions about a row, and came home famished and tired. Now, Mrs. Duty, do you think there is no other Duty of the family but yourself? Or can the Sheriff-depute neglect his Duty, that the Author may mind his? The thing cannot be;—the people of Selkirk must have justice as well as the people of England books. So the two Duties may go pull caps about it. My conscience is clear.

"August 6. — Wrote to-day a very good day's work. Walked to Chiefswood, and saw old Mrs. Tytler, a friend when life was young. Her husband, Lord Woodhouselee, was a kind, amiable, and accomplished man; and when we lived at Lasswade Cottage, soon after my marriage, we saw a great deal of the family, who were very kind to us as newly entered on the world. How many early stories did the old lady's presence recall! She might almost be my mother; yet there we sat, like two people of another generation, talking of things and people the rest knew nothing of. When a certain period of life is over, the difference of years, even when considerable, becomes of much less consequence.

"August 10. — Rose early, and wrote hard till two, when I went with Anne to Minto. I must not let her quite forego the

* See Tales of a Grandfather, chap. xxix.



custom of good society. We found the Scotts of Harden, &c., and had a very pleasant party. I like Lady M. particularly, but missed my facetious and lively friend, Lady Anna Maria. It is the fashion of some silly women and silly men to abuse her as a blue-stocking. If to have good sense and good-humour, mixed with a strong power of observing, and an equally strong one of expressing — if of this the result must be blue, she shall be as blue as they will. Such cant is the refuge of fools who fear those who can turn them into ridicule: it is a common trick to revenge supposed raillery with good substantial calumny. Slept at Minto.

"August 11. — I was up as usual, and wrote about two leaves, meaning to finish my task at home; but found my Sheriff-substitute here on my return, which took up the evening. But I shall finish the volume in less than a month after beginning it. The same exertion would bring the book out at Martinmas, but December is a better time.

"August 14. — Finished Vol. IV. yesterday evening — Deo gratias. This morning I was seized with a fit of the clevers, and finished my task by twelve o'clock, and hope to add something in the evening. I was guilty, however, of some waywardness, for I began Vol. V. of Boney instead of carrying on the Canongate as I proposed. The reason, however, was, that I might not forget the information I had acquired about the treaty of Amiens.

"August 16. — Walter and Jane arrived last night. God be praised for restoring to me my dear children in good health, which has made me happier than anything that has happened these several months. If we had Lockhart and Sophia, there would be a meeting of the beings dearest to me in life. Walked to ———, where I find a certain lady on a visit—so youthy, so beautiful, so strong in voice—with sense and learning—above all, so fond of good conversation, that, in compassion to my eyes, ears, and understanding, off I

bolted in the middle of a tremendous shower of rain, and rather chose to be wet to the skin than to be bethumped with words at that rate. In the evening we had music from the girls, and the voice of the harp and viol were heard in my halls once more, which have been so long deprived of mirth. It is with a mixed sensation I hear these sounds. I look on my children and am happy; and yet every now and then a pang shoots across my heart.

"August 19. - This morning wrote none excepting extracts, &c. being under the necessity of reading and collating a great deal, which lasted till one o'clock or thereabouts, when Dr. and Mrs. Brewster and their young people came to spend a day of happiness at the Lake. We were met there by Captain and Mrs. Hamilton, and a full party. Since the days of Seged, Emperor of Ethiopia, these days of appointed sport and happiness have seldom answered; but we came off indifferently well. We did not indeed catch much fish; but we lounged about in a delightful day, eat and drank - and the children, who are very fine infantry, were clamorously enjoying themselves. We sounded the loch in two or three different places - the deepest may be sixty feet. I was accustomed to think it much more, but your deepest pools, like your deepest politicians and philosophers, often turn out more shallow than was expected.

"August 23, Bittock's-bridge. — Set off early with Walter, Charles, and ladies, in the sociable, to make a trip to Drumlanrig. We breakfasted at Mr. Boyd's, Broadmeadows, and were received with Yarrow hospitality. From thence climbed the Yarrow, and skirted Saint Mary's Lake, and ascended the Birkhill path, under the moist and misty influence of the genius loci. Never mind — my companions were merry and I cheerful. When old people can be with the young without fatiguing them or themselves, their tempers derive the same benefits which some fantastic physicians of old supposed accrued to their constitutions from the breath of the

young and healthy. You have not — cannot again have their gaiety or pleasure in seeing sights; but still it reflects itself upon you, and you are cheered and comforted. Our luncheon eaten in the herd's cottage; — but the poor woman saddened me unawares, by asking for poor Charlotte, whom she had often seen there with me. She put me in mind that I had come twice over those hills and bogs with a wheelcarriage, before the road, now an excellent one, was made. I knew it was true; but, on my soul, looking where we must have gone, I could hardly believe I had been such a fool. For riding, pass if you will; but to put one's neck in such a venture with a wheel-carriage was too silly.

"Drumlanrig, August 24. - What visions does not this magnificent old house bring back to me! The exterior is much improved since I first knew it. It was then in the state of dilapidation to which it had been abandoned by the celebrated old Q---, and was indeed scarce wind and water tight. Then the whole wood had been felled, and the outraged castle stood in the midst of waste and desolation, excepting a few scattered old stumps, not judged worth the cutting. Now, the whole has been, ten or twelve years since, completely replanted, and the scattered seniors look as graceful as fathers surrounded by their children. The face of this immense estate has been scarcely less wonderfully changed. The scrambling tenants, who held a precarious tenure of lease under the Duke of Queensberry, at the risk (as actually took place) of losing their possession at his death, have given room to skilful men, working their farms regularly, and enjoying comfortable houses, at a rent which is enough to forbid idleness, but not to overpower industry.

"August 25. — The Duke has grown up into a graceful and apparently strong young man, and received us most kindly. I think he will be well qualified to sustain his difficult and important task. The heart is excellent, so are the talents, — good sense and knowledge of the world, picked up

at one of the great English schools (and it is one of their most important results), will prevent him from being deceived; and with perfect good-nature, he has a natural sense of his own situation, which will keep him from associating with unworthy companions. God bless him! - his father and I loved each other well, and his beautiful mother had as much of the angel as is permitted to walk this earth. I see the balcony from which they welcomed poor Charlotte and me, long ere the ascent was surmounted, streaming out their white handkerchiefs from the battlements. There were four merry people that day - now one sad individual is all that remains. Singula prædantur anni. I had a long walk to-day through the new plantations, the Duchess's Walk by the Nith, &c. (formed by Prior's 'Kitty young and gay;') fell in with the ladies, but their donkies outwalked me - a flock of sheep afterwards outwalked me, and I began to think, on my conscience, that a snail put in training might soon outwalk me. I must lay the old salve to the old sore, and be thankful for being able to walk at all. Nothing was written to-day, my writing-desk having been forgot at Parkgate, but Tom Crichton fetched it up to-day, so something more or less may be done to-morrow morning - and now to dress.

"Bittock's-bridge, August 26.—We took our departure from the friendly halls of Drumlanrig this morning, after breakfast. I trust this young nobleman will be

> 'A hedge about his friends, A heckle to his foes.'*

I would have him not quite so soft-natured as his grandfather, whose kindness sometimes mastered his excellent understanding. His father had a temper which better jumped with my lumour. Enough of ill-nature to keep your good-nature from being abused, is no bad ingredient in their disposition who have favours to bestow.

* Ballad on young Rob Roy's abduction of Jean Key. — Cromek's Collection.

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"In coming from Parkgate here, I intended to accomplish a purpose which I have for some years entertained, of visiting Lochwood, the ancient seat of the Johnstones, of which King James said, when he visited it, that the man who built it must have been a thief in his heart. It rained heavily, however, which prevented my making this excursion, and indeed I rather over-walked myself yesterday, and have occasion for rest.

'So sit down, Robin, and rest thee.'

"Abbotsford, August 27. — To-day we journeyed through the hills and amongst the storms; the weather rather bullying than bad. We viewed the Grey Mare's Tail, and I still feel confident in crawling along the ghastly bank, by which you approach the fall. I will certainly get some road of application to Mr. Hope Johnstone, to pray him to make the place accessible. We got home before half-past four, having travelled forty miles.

" Blair-Adam, August 28. - Set off with Walter and Jane at seven o'clock, and reached this place in the middle of dinner-time. By some of my not unusual blunders, we had come a day before we were expected. Luckily, in this ceremonious generation, there are still houses where such blunders only cause a little raillery, and Blair-Adam is one of them. My excellent friend is in high health and spirits, to which the presence of Sir Frederick adds not a little. His lady is here - a beautiful woman, whose countenance realizes all the poetic dreams of Byron. There is certainly something of full maturity of beauty which seems framed to be adoring and adored; and it is to be found in the full dark eye, luxuriant tresses, and rich complexion of Greece, and not among 'the pale unripened beauties of the north.' What sort of a mind this exquisite casket may contain, is not so easily known. She is anxious to please, and willing to be pleased, and, with her striking beauty, cannot fail to succeed.

"August 29. - Besides Mrs. and Admiral Adam, Mrs. Loch. and Miss Adam, I find here Mr. Impey, son of that Sir Elijah celebrated in Indian history. He has himself been in India, but has, with a great deal of sense and observation, much better address than always falls to the share of the Eastern adventurer. The art of quiet, easy, entertaining conversation is, I think, chiefly known in England. In Scotland we are pedantic, and wrangle, or we run away with the harrows on some topic we chance to be discursive upon. In Ireland they have too much vivacity, and are too desirous to make a show, to preserve the golden mean. They are the Gascon of Brit-George Ellis was the first converser I ever knew; his patience and good-breeding made me often ashamed of myself going off at score upon some favourite topic. Sharp is so celebrated for this peculiar gift as to be generally called Conversation Sharp.* The worst of this talent is. that it seems to lack sincerity. You never know what are the real sentiments of a good converser, or at least it is very difficult to discover in what extent he entertains them. His politeness is inconsistent with energy. For forming a good converser, good taste and extensive information and accomplishment are the principal requisites, to which must be added an easy and elegant delivery, and a well-toned voice. I think the higher order of genius is not favourable to this talent.

"Thorough, decided downfall of rain. Nothing for it but patience and proof-sheets.

"August 30.— The weather scarce permitted us more license than yesterday, yet we went down to Lochore, and Walter and I perambulated the property, and discussed the necessity of a new road from the south-west, also that of planting some willows along the ditches in the low grounds. Beturned to Blair-Adam to dinner.



^{*} Mr. Sharp published, in 1834, a very elegant and interesting little volume of Letters and Essays in prose and verse. See Quarterly Review, No. 102.

"Abbotsford, August 31.—Left Blair at seven in the morning. Transacted business with Cadell and Ballantyne. Arrived here at eight o'clock at night.

"September 6. — Walter being to return to Ireland for three weeks, set off to-day, and has taken Charles with him. I fear this is but a wild plan, but the prospect seemed to make them so happy, that I could not find in my heart to say 'No.' So away they went this morning to be as happy as they can. Youth is a fine carver and gilder. I had a letter from Jem Ballantyne, plague on him! full of remonstrance deep and solemn, upon the carelessness of Buonaparte. The rogue is right, too. But, as to correcting my style, to the

'Jemmy jemmy linkum feedle

tune of what is called fine writing, I'll be d——d if I do. Drew £12 in favour of Charles for his Irish jaunt; same time exhorted him to make himself as expensive to Walter, in the way of eating and drinking, as he could.

"September 8. - Sir Frederick Adam deeply regrets the present Greek war, as prematurely undertaken before knowledge and rational education had extended themselves sufficiently. The neighbourhood of the Ionian Islands was fast producing civilization; and as knowledge is power, it is clear that example and opportunities of education must soon have given them an immense superiority over the Turk. This premature war has thrown all back into a state of barbarism. was, I cannot doubt, precipitated by the agents of Russia. Sir Frederick spoke most highly of Byron — the soundness of his views, the respect in which he was held - his just ideas of the Grecian cause and character, and the practical and rational wishes he formed for them. Singular that a man whose conduct in his own personal affairs had been anything but practical, should be thus able to stand by the helm of a sinking State! Sir Frederick thinks he might have done much for them if he had lived. The rantipole friends of liberty,

who go about freeing nations with the same success which Don Quixote had in redressing wrongs, have, of course, blundered everything which they touched. — Task bang-up.

"September 12.—I begin to fear Nap will swell to seven volumes. I had a long letter from James B., threatening me with eight; but that is impossible. The event of his becoming Emperor is the central point of his history. Now I have just attained it, and it is the centre of the third volume. Two volumes and a half may be necessary to complete the whole.—As I slept for a few minutes in my chair, to which I am more addicted than I could wish, I heard, as I thought, my poor wife call me by the familiar name of fondness which she gave me. My recollections on waking were melancholy enough. These be

'The airy tongues that syllable men's names.' *

All, I believe, have some natural desire to consider these unusual impressions as bodements of good or evil to come. But alas! this is a prejudice of our own conceit. They are the empty echoes of what is past, not the foreboding voice of things to come.

"September 13.—Wrote my task in the morning, and thereafter had a letter from that sage Privy-counsellor —... He proposes to me that I shall propose to the — of —, and offers his own right honourable intervention to bring so beautiful a business to bear. I am struck dumb — absolutely mute and speechless — and how to prevent him making me farther a fool is not easy, for he has left me no time to assure him of the absurdity of what he proposes; and if he should ever hint at such a piece of d—d impertinence, what must the lady think of my conceit or of my feelings! I will write to his present quarters, however, that he may, if possible, have warning not to continue this absurdity.†

[†] Lady Scott had not been quite four months dead, and the entry



^{*} Milton's Comus, v. 208.

" September 14. - I should not have forgotten, among the memorabilia of vesterday, that two young Frenchmen made their way to our sublime presence, in guerdon of a laudatory copy of French verses sent up the evening before, by way of 'Open Sesamum,' I suppose. I have not read them, nor shall I. No man that ever wrote a line despised the pap of praise so heartily as I do. There is nothing I scorn more, except those who think the ordinary sort of praise or censure is matter of the least consequence. People have almost always some private view of distinguishing themselves, or of gratifying their animosity - some point, in short, to carry, with which you have no relation - when they take the trouble to praise you. In general, it is their purpose to get the person praised to puff away in return. To me their rank praises no more make amends for their bad poetry, than tainted butter would pass off stale fish.

"September 17. — Rather surprised with a letter from Lord Melville, informing me he and Mr. Peel had put me into the Commission for inquiring into the condition of the Colleges in Scotland. I know little on the subject, but I dare say as much as some of the official persons who are inserted of course. The want of efficient men is the reason alleged. I must of course do my best, though I have little hope of being useful, and the time it will occupy is half ruinous to me, to whom time is everything. Besides, I suppose the honour is partly meant as an act of grace for Malachi.

"Jedburgh, September 19.—Circuit. Went to poor Mr. Shortreed's, and regretted bitterly the distress of the family, though they endeavoured to bear it bravely, and to make my reception as comfortable and cheerful as possible. My old

of the preceding day shows how extremely ill-timed was this communication, from a gentleman with whom Sir Walter had never had any intimacy. This was not the only proposition of the kind that reached him during his widowhood. In the present case there was very high rank and an ample fortune.

friend R. S. gave me a ring found in a grave at the Abbey, to be kept in memory of his son. I will certainly preserve it with especial care.*

"Many trifles at circuit, chiefly owing to the cheap whisky, as they were almost all riots. One case of an assault on a deaf and dumb woman. She was herself the chief evidence; but being totally without education, and having, from her sitnation, very imperfect notions of a Deity and a future state, no oath could be administered. Mr. Kinniburgh, teacher of the deaf and dumb, was sworn interpreter, together with another person, her neighbour, who knew the accidental or conventional signs which the poor thing had invented for herself, as Mr. K. was supposed to understand the more general or natural signs common to people in such a situation. He went through the task with much address, and it was wonderful to see them make themselves intelligible to each other by mere pantomime. Still I did not consider such evidence as much to be trusted to on a criminal case. Several previous interviews had been necessary between the interpreter and the witness, and this is very much like getting up a story. Some of the signs, brief in themselves, of which Mr. K. gave long interpretations, put me in mind of Lord Burleigh in the Critic. Did he mean all this by a shake of the head?' 'Yes, if he shook his head as I taught him.' The man was found not guilty. Mr. K. told us of a pupil of his whom he restored, as it may be said, to humanity, and who told him that his ideas of another world were that some great person in the skies lighted up the sun in the morning as he saw his mother light a fire, and the stars in the evening as she kindled a lamp. He said the witness had ideas of truth and falsehood, which was, I believe, true: and that she had an idea of punishment in a future state, which I doubt. He confessed she could not give any guess at its duration, whether temporary or eternal. Dined of course with Lord Mackenzie, the Judge.

*Mr. Thomas Shortreed, a young gentleman of elegant taste and attainments, devotedly attached to Sir Walter, and much beloved in return, had recently died.



" September 20. - Waked after a restless night, in which I dreamed of poor Tom Shortreed. Breakfasted with the Rev. Dr. Somerville. This venerable gentleman is one of the oldest of the literary brotherhood - I suppose about eightyseven,* - and except a little deafness, quite entire. Living all his life in good society as a gentleman born - and having, besides, professional calls to make among the poor - he must know, of course, much that is curious concerning the momentous changes which have passed under his eyes. He talked of them accordingly, and has written something on the subject. but has scarce the force necessary to seize on the most striking points. The bowl that rolls easiest along the green goes farthest, and has the least clay sticking to it. I have often noticed that a kindly, placid good-humour is the companion of longevity, and, I suspect, frequently the leading cause of it. Quick, keen, sharp observation, with the power of contrast and illustration, disturbs this easy current of thought. My good friend, the venerable Doctor, will not, I think, die of that disease.

"September 23. — Wrought in the morning, but only at reading and proofs. That cursed battle of Jena is like to cost me more time than it did Buonaparte to gain it. I met Colonel Fergusson about one, to see his dogs run. It is a sport I have loved well; but now, I know not why, I find it little interesting. To be sure, I used to gallop, and that I cannot now do. We had good sport, however, and killed five hares. I felt excited during the chase, but the feeling was but momentary. My mind was immediately turned to other remembrances, and to pondering upon the change which had taken place in my own feelings. The day was positively heavenly, and the wild hill-side, with our little coursing party, was beautiful to look at. Yet I felt like a man come from the dead.

* The Rev. Dr. Thomas Somerville, minister of Jedburgh, author of the History of Great Britain during the reign of Queen Anne, and other works, died 14th May 1830, in the 90th year of his age, and 64th of his ministry. See ante, Vol. I. p. 288.

looking with indifference on that which interested him while living. We dined at Huntly Burn. Kind and comfortable as usual.

"September 24. — I made a rally to-day, and wrote four pages, or nearly. Never stirred abroad the whole day, but was made happy after dinner by the return of Charles, full of his Irish jaunt, and happy as young men are with the change of scene. To-morrow I must go to Melville Castle. I wonder what I can do or say about these Universities. One thing occurs — the distribution of bursaries only ex meritis. That is, I would have the presentations continue in the present patrons, but exact that those presented should be qualified by success in their literary attainments and distinction acquired at school to hold those scholarships. This seems to be following out the idea of the founders, who, doubtless, intended the furthering of good literature. To give education to dull mediocrity is a flinging of the children's bread to dogs — it is sharping a hatchet on a razor-strop, which renders the strop useless, and does no good to the hatchet. Well, something we will do.

"Melville Castle, September 25.—Found Lord and Lady M. in great distress. Their son Robert is taken ill at a Russian town about 350 miles from Moscow — dangerously ill. The distance increases the extreme distress of the parents, who, however, bore it like themselves. I was glad to spend a day upon the old terms with such old friends, and believe my being with them, even in this moment of painful suspense, as it did not diminish the kindness of my reception, might rather tend to divert them from the cruel subject. Dr. Nicoll, Principal of St. Andrews, dined — a very gentlemanlike sensible man. We spoke of the visitation, of granting degrees, of public examinations, of abolishing the election of professors by the Senatus Academicus (a most pregnant source of jobs), and much beside — but all desultory. I go back to Abbotsford to-morrow morning.



" Abbotsford, September 29. - A sort of zeal of working has seized me, which I must avail myself of. No dejection of mind, and no tremor of nerves, for which God be humbly My spirits are neither low nor high - grave. I think, and quiet - a complete twilight of the mind. I wrote five pages, nearly a double task, yet wandered for three hours. axe in hand, superintending the thinning of the home planting. That does good too. I feel it give steadiness to my mind. Women, it is said, go mad much seldomer than men. I fancy, if this be true, it is in some degree owing to the little manual works in which they are constantly employed, which regulate in some degree the current of ideas, as the pendulum regulates the motion of the time-piece. I do not know if this is sense or nonsense; but I am sensible that if I were in solitary confinement, without either the power of taking exercise or employing myself in study, six months would make me a madman or an idiot.

"October 3. — I wrote my task as usual; — but, strange to tell, there is a want of paper. I expect some to-day. In the meantime, to avoid all quarrel with Dame Duty, I cut up some other leaves into the usual statutory size. They say of a fowl, that if you draw a chalk line on a table, and lay chick-a-diddle down with his bill upon it, the poor thing will imagine himself opposed by an insurmountable barrier, which he will not attempt to cross. Suchlike are one-half of the obstacles which serve to interrupt our best resolves, and such is my pretended want of paper. It is like Sterne's want of sous, when he went to relieve the Pauvre Honteux.

"October 5.— I was thinking this morning that my time glided away in a singularly monotonous manner, — like one of those dark grey days which neither promise sunshine nor threaten rain — too melancholy for enjoyment, too tranquil for repining. But this day has brought a change which somewhat shakes my philosophy. I find, by a letter from J. Gibson, that I may go to London without danger; and if I may, I in a

manner must, to examine the papers in the Secretary of State's office about Buonaparte when at St. Helena. The opportunity having been offered, must be accepted; and yet I had much rather stay at home. Even the prospect of seeing Sophia and Lockhart must be mingled with pain; — yet this is foolish too. Lady Hamilton * writes me that Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian Minister at Paris, is willing to communicate to me some particulars of Buonaparte's early life. Query — might I not go on there? In for a penny, in for a pound. I intend to take Anne with me, and the pleasure will be great to her, who deserves much at my hand.

"October 9.— A gracious letter from Messrs. Abud and Son, bill-brokers, &c.; assure my trustees that they will institute no legal proceedings against me for four or five weeks. And so I am permitted to spend my money and my time to improve the means of paying them their debts, for that is the only use of this journey. They are Jews: I suppose the devil baits for Jews with a pork griskin. Were I not to exert myself, I wonder where their money is to come from.

"October 10. — I must prepare for going to London, and perhaps to Paris. I have great unwillingness to set out on this journey; I almost think it ominous; but

'They that look to freits, my master dear, Their freits will follow them.'

I am down-hearted about leaving all my things, after I was quietly settled; it is a kind of disrooting that recalls a thousand painful ideas of former happier journeys. And to be at the mercy of these fellows. God help—but rather God bless—man must help himself.

* Now Lady Jane Hamilton Dalrymple — the eldest daughter of the illustrious Admiral Lord Duncan. Her Ladyship's kindness procured several valuable communications to the author of the Life of Buonaparte.



"October 11. — We are ingenious self-tormentors. This journey annoys me more than anything of the kind in my life. My wife's figure seems to stand before me, and her voice is in my ears — 'Scott, do not go.' It half frightens me. Strange throbbing at my heart, and a disposition to be very sick. It is just the effect of so many feelings which had been lulled asleep by the uniformity of my life, but which awaken on any new subject of agitation. Poor, poor Charlotte!! I cannot daub it farther. I get incapable of arranging my papers too. I will go out for half an hour. God relieve me!"

CHAPTER LXXII.

Journey to London and Paris — Scott's Diary — Rokeby —
Burleigh — Imitators of the Waverley Novels — Southey's
Peninsular War — Royal Lodge at Windsor — George IV.
— Adelphi Theatre — Terry, Crofton Croker, Thomas Pringle, Allan Cunningham, Moore, Rogers, Lawrence, &c. —
Calais, Montreuil, &c. — Paris — Pozzo di Borgo, Lord
Granville, Marshals Macdonald and Marmont, Gallois, W.
R. Spencer, Princess Galitzin, Charles X., Duchess of Angouleme, &c. — Enthusiastic reception in Paris — Dover
Cliff — Theodore Hook, Lydia White, Duke of Wellington,
Peel, Canning, Croker, &c. &c. — Duke of York — Madame
D'Arblay — State of Politics — Oxford — Cheltenham —
Abbotsford — Walker Street, Edinburgh.

OCT. - DEC. 1826.

On the 12th of October, Sir Walter left Abbotsford for London, where he had been promised access to the papers in the Government offices; and thence he proceeded to Paris, in the hope of gathering from various eminent persons authentic anecdotes concerning Napoleon. His Diary shows that he was successful in obtaining many valuable materials for the completion of his historical work; and reflects, with sufficient distinctness, the very brilliant reception he, on this occasion, experienced both in London and Paris. The range of his society is strikingly (and unconsciously) exemplified in the record of one day, when we find him breakfasting at

the Royal Lodge in Windsor Park, and supping on oysters and porter in "honest Dan Terry's house, like a squirrel's cage," above the Adelphi Theatre, in the Strand. There can be no doubt that this expedition was in many ways serviceable to his Life of Napoleon; and I think as little, that it was chiefly so by renerving his spirits. The deep and respectful sympathy with which his misfortunes, and gallant behaviour under them, had been regarded by all classes of men at home and abroad, was brought home to his perception in a way not to be mistaken. He was cheered and gratified, and returned to Scotland, with renewed hope and courage, for the prosecution of his marvellous course of industry.

EXTRACTS FROM DIARY.

"Rokeby Park, October 13. - We left Carlisle before seven, and, visiting Appleby Castle by the way (a most interesting and curious place), we got to Morritt's about half-past four, where we had as warm a welcome as one of the warmest hearts in the world could give an old friend. It was great pleasure to me to see Morritt happy in the middle of his family circle, undisturbed, as heretofore, by the sickness of any one dear to him. I may note that I found much pleasure in my companion's conversation, as well as in her mode of managing all her little concerns on the road. I am apt to judge of character by good-humour and alacrity in these petty concerns. I think the inconveniences of a journey seem greater to me than formerly; while, on the other hand, the pleasures it affords are rather less. The ascent of Stainmore seemed duller and longer than usual, and, on the other hand, Bowes, which used to strike me as a distinguished feature, seemed an ill-formed mass of rubbish, a great deal lower in height than I

had supposed; yet I have seen it twenty times at least. On the other hand, what I lose in my own personal feelings I gain in those of my companion, who shows an intelligent curiosity and interest in what she sees. I enjoy, therefore, reflectively, veluti in speculo, the sort of pleasure to which I am now less accessible.—Saw in Morritt's possession the original miniature of Milton, by Cooper—a valuable thing indeed. The countenance is handsome and dignified, with a strong expression of genius.*

- "Grantham, October 15.— Old England is no changeling. It is long since I travelled this road, having come up to town chiefly by sea of late years. One race of red-nosed innkeepers are gone, and their widows, eldest sons, or head-waiters, exercise hospitality in their room with the same bustle and importance. But other things seem, externally at least, much the same: the land is better ploughed; straight ridges everywhere adopted in place of the old circumflex of twenty years ago. Three horses, however, or even four, are still often seen in a plough yoked one before the other. Ill habits do not go out at once.
- "Biggleswade, October 16. Visited Burleigh this morning; the first time I ever saw that grand place, where there are so many objects of interest and curiosity. The house is magnificent, in the style of James I.'s reign, and consequently in mixed Gothic. Of paintings I know nothing; so shall attempt to say nothing. But whether to connoisseurs, or to an ignorant admirer like myself, the Salvator Mundi, by Carlo Dolci, must seem worth a king's ransom. Lady Exeter, who was at home, had the geodness or curiosity to wish to see us. She is a beauty after my own heart; a great deal of liveliness in the face; an absence alike of form and of affected ease, and really courteous after a genuine and ladylike fashion.
- * This precious miniature, executed by Cooper for Milton's favourite daughter, was long in the possession of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and bequeathed by him to the poet Mason, who was an intimate friend of Mr. Morritt's father.



"25 Pall-Mall, October 17. — Here am I in this capital once more, after an April-weather meeting with my daughter and Lockhart. Too much grief in our first meeting to be joyful; too much pleasure to be distressing — a giddy sensation between the painful and the pleasurable. I will call another subject.

"I read with interest, during my journey, Sir John Chiverton * and Brambletye House — novels, in what I may surely claim as the style

'Which I was born to introduce — Refined it first, and show'd its use.' †

They are both clever books — one in imitation of the days of chivalry — the other (by Horace Smith, one of the authors of Rejected Addresses) dated in the time of the Civil Wars, and introducing historical characters.

"I believe, were I to publish the Canongate Chronicles without my name (nomme de querre, I mean), the event might be a corollary to the fable of the peasant who made the real pig squeak against the imitator, when the sapient audience killed the poor grunter as if inferior to the biped in his own language. The peasant could, indeed, confute the long-eared multitude by showing piggy; but were I to fail as a knight with a white and maiden shield, and then vindicate my claim to attention by putting 'By the Author of Waverley' in the title, my good friend Publicum would defend itself by stating I had tilted so ill, that my course had not the least resemblance to former doings, when indisputably I bore away the garland. Therefore I am firmly and resolutely determined to tilt under my own cognizance. The hazard, indeed, remains of being beaten. But there is a prejudice (not an undue one neither) in favour of the original patentee; and Joe Manton's name has borne out many a sorry gun-barrel. More of this to-morrow.

* Chiverton was the first publication (anonymous) of Mr. William Harrison Ainsworth, the author of Rookwood and other popular romances.

[†] Swift.

Expense of journey,											4	E41	0	0
Anne, pocket money,												5	0	0
Servants on journey,												2	0	0
Cash in purse (silver not reckoned),												2	0	0
•														
£50											E50	0	0	

This is like to be an expensive trip; but if I can sell an early copy to a French translator, it should bring me home. Thank God, little Dohnnie Hoo, as he calls himself, is looking well, though the poor dear child is kept always in a prostrate posture.

" October 18. - I take up again my remarks on imitators. I am sure I mean the gentlemen no wrong by calling them so, and heartily wish they had followed a better model. But it serves to show me veluti in speculo my own errors, or, if you will, those of the style. One advantage, I think, I still have over all of them. They may do their fooling with better grace; but I, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, do it more natural. They have to read old books, and consult antiquarian collections, to get their knowledge; I write because I have long since read such works, and possess, thanks to a strong memory, the information which they have to seek for. This leads to a dragging-in historical details by head and shoulders, so that the interest of the main piece is lost in minute descriptions of events which do not affect its progress. Perhaps I have sinned in this way myself; indeed, I am but too conscious of having considered the plot only as what Bayes calls the means of bringing in fine things; so that, in respect to the descriptions, it resembled the string of the showman's box, which he pulls to exhibit in succession, Kings, Queens, the Battle of Waterloo, Buonaparte at St. Helena, Newmarket Races, and White-headed Bob floored by Jemmy from Town. All this I may have done, but I have repented of it; and in my better efforts, while I conducted my story through the agency of historical personages, and by connecting it with historical incidents, I have endeavoured to weave VOL. VIII.

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them pretty closely together, and in future I will study this more. Must not let the back-ground eclipse the principal figures—the frame overpower the picture.

"Another thing in my favour is, that my contemporaries steal too openly. Mr. Smith has inserted in Brambletye House, whole pages from De Foe's 'Fire and Plague of London.'

'Steal! foh! a fico for the phrase — Convey, the wise it call!'

When I convey an incident or so, I am at as much pains to avoid detection as if the offence could be indicted at the Old Bailey. But leaving this, hard pressed as I am by these imitators, who must put the thing out of fashion at last, I consider, like a fox at his shifts, whether there be a way to dodge them - some new device to throw them off, and have a mile or two of free ground while I have legs and wind left to use it. There is one way to give novelty - to depend for success on the interest of a well-contrived story. But, wo's me! that requires thought, consideration - the writing out a regular plan or plot - above all, the adhering to one - which I never can do, for the ideas rise as I write, and bear such a disproportioned extent to that which each occupied at the first concoction, that (cocksnowns!) I shall never be able to take the trouble; and yet to make the world stare, and gain a new march ahead of them all! Well, something we still will do.

> 'Liberty's in every blow; Let us do or die!'

Poor Rob Burns! to tack thy fine strains of sublime patriotism! Better Tristram Shandy's vein. Hand me my cap and bells there. So now, I am equipped. I open my raree-show with

'Ma'am, will you walk in, and fal de ral diddle? And, sir, will you stalk in, and fal de ral diddle? And, miss, will you pop in, and fal de ral diddle? And, master, pray hop in, and fal de ral diddle.'

Query — How long is it since I heard that strain of dulcet

mood, and where or how came I to pick it up? It is not mine, 'though by your smiling you seem to say so.'* Here is a proper morning's work! But I am childish with seeing them all well and happy here; and as I can neither whistle nor sing, I must let the giddy humour run to waste on paper.

"Sallied forth in the morning; bought a hat. Met Sir William Knighton,† from whose discourse I guess that Malachi has done me no prejudice in a certain quarter; with more indications of the times, which I need not set down. Sallied again after breakfast, and visited the Piccadilly ladies. Saw also the Duchess of Buckingham, and Lady Charlotte Bury, with a most beautiful little girl. Owen Rees breakfasted, and agreed I should have what the Frenchman has offered for the advantage of translating Napoleon, which will help my expenses to town and down again.

"October 19. — I rose at my usual time, but could not write; so read Southey's History of the Peninsular War. It is very good, indeed — honest English principle in every line; but there are many prejudices, and there is a tendency to augment a work already too long, by saying all that can be said of the history of ancient times appertaining to every place mentioned. What care we whether Saragossa be derived from Cæsaria Augusta? Could he have proved it to be Numantium, there would have been a concatenation accordingly.1

"Breakfasted at Sam Rogers's with Sir Thomas Lawrence; Luttrel, the great London wit; Richard Sharp, &c. One of them made merry with some part of Rose's Ariosto; proposed

^{*} Hamlet, Act II. Scene 2.

[†] Sir William was Private Secretary to King George IV. Sir Walter made his acquaintance in August 1822, and ever afterwards they corresponded with each other — sometimes very confidentially.

[†] It is amusing to compare this criticism with Sir Walter's own anxiety to identify his daughter-in-law's place, Lochore, with the Urbs Orrea of the Roman writers. See Vol. VII. p. 107.

that the Italian should be printed on the other side, for the sake of assisting the indolent reader to understand the English; and complained of his using more than once the phrase of a lady having 'voided her saddle,' which would certainly sound extraordinary at Apothecaries' Hall. Well, well, Rose carries a dirk too. The morning was too dark for Westminster Abbey, which we had projected.

"I then went to Downing Street, and am put by Mr. Wilmot Horton into the hands of a confidential clerk, Mr. Smith, who promises access to everything. Then saw Croker, who gave me a bundle of documents. Sir George Cockburn promises his despatches and journal. In short, I have ample prospect of materials. Dined with Mrs. Coutts. Tragi-comic distress of my good friend on the marriage of her presumptive heir with a daughter of Lucien Buonaparte.

" October 20. — Commanded down to pass a day at Windsor. This is very kind of his Majesty. - At breakfast, Crofton Croker, author of the Irish Fairy Tales - little as a dwarf, keen-eyed as a hawk, and of easy, prepossessing manners - something like Tom Moore. Here were also Terry, Allan Cunningham, Newton, and others. Now I must go to work. Went down to Windsor, or rather to the Lodge in the Forest, which, though ridiculed by connoisseurs, seems to be no bad specimen of a royal retirement, and is delightfully sit-A kind of cottage, too large perhaps for the style, but yet so managed, that in the walks you only see parts of it at once, and these well composed and grouping with the immense His Majesty received me with the same mixture of kindness and courtesy which has always distinguished his conduct towards me. There was no company besides the royal retinue - Lady Conyngham - her daughter - and two or three other ladies. After we left table, there was excellent music by the royal band, who lay ambushed in a green-house adjoining the apartment. The King made me sit beside him. and talk a great deal — too much perhaps — for he has the art of raising one's spirits, and making you forget the retenue which

is prudent everywhere, especially at court. But he converses himself with so much ease and elegance, that you lose thoughts of the prince in admiring the well-bred and accomplished gentleman. He is in many respects the model of a British Monarch - has little inclination to try experiments on government otherwise than through his Ministers - sincerely, I believe, desires the good of his subjects - is kind towards the distressed, and moves and speaks 'every inch a king.'* I am sure such a man is fitter for us than one who would long to head armies, or be perpetually intermeddling with la grande politique. A sort of reserve, which creeps on him daily, and prevents his going to places of public resort, is a disadvantage, and prevents his being so generally popular as is earnestly to be desired. This, I think, was much increased by the behaviour of the rabble in the brutal insanity of the Queen's trial, when John Bull, meaning the best in the world, made such a beastly figure.

"October 21. - Walked in the morning with Sir William Knighton, and had much confidential chat, not fit to be here set down, in case of accidents. He undertook most kindly to recommend Charles, when he has taken his degree, to be attached to some of the diplomatic missions, which I think is best for the lad, after all. After breakfast, went to Windsor Castle, and examined the improvements going on there under Mr. Wyattville, who appears to possess a great deal of taste and feeling for Gothic architecture. The old apartments, splendid enough in extent and proportion, are paltry in finishing. Instead of being lined with heart of oak, the palace of the British King is hung with paper, painted wainscot colour. There are some fine paintings, and some droll ones: among the last are those of divers princes of the House of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, of which Queen Charlotte was descended. They are ill-coloured, orang-outang-looking figures, with black eyes and hook-noses, in old-fashioned uniforms. Returned to a hasty dinner in Pall-Mall, and then hurried away to see

^{*} King Lear, Act IV. Scene 6.



honest Dan Terry's theatre, salled the Adelphi, where saw the Pilot, from an American novel of that name. It is extremely popular, the dramatist having seized on the whole story, and turned the odious and ridiculous parts, assigned by the original author to the British, against the Yankees themselves. There is a quiet effrontery in this, that is of a rare and peculiar character. The Americans were so much displeased, that they attempted a row - which rendered the piece doubly attractive to the seamen at Wapping, who came up and crowded the house night after night, to support the honour of the British flag. After all, one must deprecate whatever keeps up ill-will betwixt America and the mother country; and we in particular should avoid awakening painful recollections. Our high situation enables us to contemn petty insults, and to make advances towards cordiality. however, glad to see Dan's theatre as full seemingly as it could hold. The heat was dreadful, and Anne so unwell that she was obliged to be carried into Terry's house, a curious dwelling no larger than a squirrel's cage, which he has contrived to squeeze out of the vacant space of the theatre, and which is accessible by a most complicated combination of staircases and small passages. There we had rare good porter and oysters after the play, and found Anne much better.

"October 22. — This morning Mr. Wilmot Horton, Under Secretary of State, breakfasted. He is full of some new plan of relieving the poor's-rates, by encouraging emigration.* But John Bull will think this savours of Botany-Bay. The attempt to look the poor's-rates in the face is certainly meritorious. Laboured in writing and marking extracts to be copied, from breakfast to dinner — with the exception of an hour spent in telling Johnnie the history of his namesake, Gilpin. Tom Moore and Sir Thomas Lawrence came in the evening, which made a pleasant soirée. Smoke my French —

^{*} The Right Honourable Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, Bart. (lately Governor of Ceylon) has published various tracts on the important subject here alluded to. — [1839.]



Egad, it is time to air some of my vocabulary. It is, I find, cursedly musty.

"October 23.— Sam Rogers and Moore breakfasted here, and we were very merry fellows. Moore seemed disposed to go to France with us. I foresee I shall be embarrassed with more communications than I can use or trust to, coloured as they must be by the passions of those who make them. Thus I have a statement from the Duchess d'Escars, to which the Buonapartists would, I dare say, give no credit. If Talleyrand, for example, could be communicative, he must have ten thousand reasons for perverting the truth, and yet a person receiving a direct communication from him would be almost barred from disputing it.

'Sing tantarara, rogues all.'

"We dined at the Residentiary-house with good Dr. Hughes — Allan Cunningham, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and young Mr. Hughes. Thomas Pringle * is returned from the Cape. He might have done well there, could he have scoured his brains of politics, but he must needs publish a Whig journal at the Cape of Good Hope!! He is a worthy creature, but conceited withal — hinc illee lachrymæ. He brought me some antlers and a skin, in addition to others he had sent to Abbotsford four years since.

* Mr. Pringle was a Roxburghshire farmer's son (lame from birth) who, in youth, attracted Sir Walter's notice by his poem called, Scenes of Teviotdale. He was for a time Editor of Blackwood's Magazine, but the publisher and he had different politics, quarrelled, and parted. Sir Walter then gave Pringle strong recommendations to the late Lord Charles Somerset, Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, in which colony he settled, and for some years throve under the Governor's protection; but the newspaper alluded to in the text ruined his prospects at the Cape — he returned to England — became Secretary to an anti-slavery association — published a charming little volume entitledi African Sketches, — and died, I fear in very distressed circumstances, in December 1834. He was a man of amiable feelings and elegant genius.



"October 24. — Laboured in the morning. At breakfast, Dr. Holland, and Cohen, whom they now call Palgrave, a mutation of names which confused my recollections. Item, Moore. I worked at the Colonial Office pretty hard. Dined with Mr. Wilmot Horton, and his beautiful wife, the original of the 'She walks in beauty,' &c. of poor Byron. — N. B. The conversation is seldom excellent among official people. So many topics are what Otaheitians call taboo. We hunted down a pun or two, which were turned out, like the stag. at the Epping Hunt, for the pursuit of all'and sundry. Came home early, and was in bed by eleven.

"October 25. — Kind Mr. Wilson and his wife at breakfast; also Sir Thomas Lawrence. Locker came in afterwards, and made a proposal to me to give up his intended Life of George III. in my favour on cause shown. I declined the proposal, not being of opinion that my genius lies that way, and not relishing hunting in couples. Afterwards went to the Colonial Office, and had Robert Hay's assistance in my inquiries — then to the French Ambassador's for my passports. Picked up Sotheby, who endeavoured to saddle me for a review of his polyglott Virgil. I fear I shall scarce convince him that I know nothing of the Latin lingo. Sir. R. H. Inglis, Richard Sharp, and other friends called. We dine at Miss Dumergue's, and spend a part of our soirée, at Lydia White's. To-morrow,

'For France, for France, for it is more than need.' ‡

"Calais, October 26. — Up at five, and in the packet by six. A fine passage — save at the conclusion, while we lay on and off the harbour of Calais. But the tossing made no impression on my companion or me; we ate and drank like

* William Wilson, Esq. of Wandsworth Common, formerly of Wilsontown, in Lanarkshire.

† E. H. Locker, Esq., then Secretary, now one of the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital — an old and dear friend of Scott's.

t King John, Act. I. Scene 1.



dragoons the whole way, and were able to manage a good supper and best part of a bottle of Chablis, at the classic Dessein's, who received us with much courtesy.

" October 27. - Custom-house, &c. detained us till near ten o'clock, so we had time to walk on the Boulevards, and to see the fortifications, which must be very strong, all the country round being flat and marshy. Lost, as all know, by the bloody papist bitch (one must be vernacular when on French ground) Queen Mary, of red-hot memory. I would rather she had burned a score more of bishops. If she had kept it, her sister Bess would sooner have parted with her virginity. Charles I. had no temptation to part with it - it might, indeed, have been shuffled out of our hands during the Civil Wars, but Noll would have as soon let Monsieur draw one of his grinders then Charles II. would hardly have dared to sell such an old possession, as he did Dunkirk; and after that the French had little chance till the Revolution. Even then, I think, we could have held a place that could be supplied from our own element, Cui bono? None, I think, but to plague the rogues. - We dined at Cormont, and being stopped by Mr. Canning having taken up all the post-horses, could only reach Montreuil that night. I should have liked to have seen some more of this place, which is fortified; and as it stands on an elevated and rocky site, must present some fine points. But as we came in late, and left early, I can only bear witness to good treatment, good supper, good vin de Barsac, and excellent heds.

"October 28. — Breakfasted at Abbeville, and saw a very handsome Gothic church, and reached Grandvilliers at night. The house is but second-rate, though lauded by several English travellers for the moderation of its charges, as was recorded in a book presented to us by the landlady. There is no great patriotism in publishing that a traveller thinks the bills moderate — it serves usually as an intimation to mine host or hostess that John Bull will bear a little more squeezing. I



gave my attestation too, however, for the charges of the good lady resembled those elsewhere, and her anxiety to please was extreme. Folks must be harder hearted than I am to resist the *empressement*, which may, indeed, be venal, yet has in its expression a touch of cordiality.

"Paris, October 29. - Breakfasted at Beauvais, and saw its magnificent cathedral - unfinished it has been left, and unfinished it will remain, of course, - the fashion of cathedrals being passed away. But even what exists is inimitable, the choir particularly, and the grand front. Beauvais is called the Pucelle, yet, so far as I can see, she wears no stays — I mean, has no fortifications. On we run, however. Voque la galère : et voila nous à Paris, Hotel de Windsor (Rue Rivoli), where we are well lodged. France, so far as I can see, which is very little, has not undergone many changes. The image of war has, indeed, passed away, and we no longer see troops crossing the country in every direction - villages either ruined or hastily fortified - inhabitants sheltered in the woods and caves to escape the rapacity of the soldiers, - all this has passed away. The inns, too, much amended. There is no occasion for that rascally practice of making a bargain - or combiening your landlady, before you unharness your horses, which formerly was matter of necessity. The general taste of the English seems to regulate the travelling - naturally enough, as the hotels, of which there are two or three in each town, chiefly subsist by them. We did not see one French equipage on the road; the natives seem to travel entirely in the diligence, and doubtless à bon marché; the road was thronged with English. But in her great features France is the same as ever. An oppressive air of solitude seems to hover over these rich and extended plains, while we are sensible, that whatever is the nature of the desolation, it cannot be sterility. The towns are small, and have a poor appearance, and more frequently exhibit signs of decayed splendour than of increasing prosperity. The chateau, the abode of the gentleman, and the villa, the retreat of the thriving negociant, - are

rarely seen till you come to Beaumont. At this place, which well deserves its name of the fair mount, the prospect improves greatly, and country-seats are seen in abundance; also woods, sometimes deep and extensive, at other times scattered in groves and single trees. Amidst these the oak seldom or never is found; England, lady of the ocean, seems to claim it exclusively as her own. Neither are there any quantity of Poplars in abundance give a formal air to the landscape. The forests chiefly consist of beeches, with some birches, and the roads are bordered by elms cruelly cropped and pollarded The demand for fire-wood occasions these and switched. mutilations. If I could waft by a wish the thinnings of Abbotsford here, it would make a little fortune of itself. But then to switch and mutilate my trees! - not for a thousand francs. Ay, but sour grapes, quoth the fox.

"October 30. - Finding ourselves snugly settled in our Hotel, we determined to remain here at fifteen francs per day. We are in the midst of what can be seen. This morning wet and surly. Sallied, however, by the assistance of a hired coach, and left cards for Count Pozzo di Borgo, Lord Granville, our ambassador, and M. Gallois, author of the History of Venice. Found no one at home, not even the old pirate Galignani, at whose den I ventured to call. Showed my companion the Louvre (which was closed unluckily), the fronts of the palace, with its courts, and all that splendid quarter which the fame of Paris rests upon in security. We can never do the like in Britain. Royal magnificence can only be displayed by despotic power. In England, were the most splendid street or public building to be erected, the matter must be discussed in Parliament, or perhaps some sturdy cobbler holds out, and refuses to part with his stall, and the whole plan is disconcerted. Long may such impediments exist! But then we should conform to circumstances. and assume in our public works a certain sober simplicity of character, which should point out that they were dictated by utility rather than show. The affectation of an expensive

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style only places us at a disadvantageous contrast with other nations, and our substitution of plaster for freestone resembles the mean ambition which displays Bristol stones in default of diamonds.

"We went in the evening to the Comedie Française; Rosamonde the piece. It is the composition of a young man with a promising name - Emile de Bonnechose; the story that of There were some good situations, and the Fair Rosamond. actors in the French taste seemed to be admirable, particularly Mademoiselle Bourgoin. It would be absurd to criticise what I only half understood; but the piece was well received. and produced a very strong effect. Two or three ladies were carried out in hysterics; one next to our box was frightfully ill. A Monsieur à belles moustaches - the husband. I trust. though it is likely they were en partie fine - was extremely and affectionately assiduous. She was well worthy of the trouble, being very pretty indeed - the face beautiful, even amidst the involuntary convulsions. The afterpiece was Femme Juge et Partie, with which I was less amused than I had expected, because I found I understood the language less than I did ten or eleven years since. Well, well, I am past the age of mending.

"Some of our friends in London had pretended that at Paris I might stand some chance of being encountered by the same sort of tumultuary reception which I met in Ireland; but for this I see no ground. It is a point on which I am totally indifferent. As a literary man I cannot affect to despise public applause; as a private gentleman, I have always been embarrassed and displeased with popular clamours, even when in my favour. I know very well the breath of which such shouts are composed, and am sensible those who applaud me to-day would be as ready to toss me to-morrow; and I would not have them think that I put such a value on their favour as would make me for an instant fear their displeasure. Now all this disclamation is sincere, and yet it sounds affected. It puts me in mind of an old woman, who, when Carlisle was taken by the Highlanders in 1745, chose to be particularly

apprehensive of personal violence, and shut herself up in a closet, in order that she might escape ravishment. But no one came to disturb her solitude, and she began to be sensible that poor Donald was looking out for victuals, or seeking some small plunder, without bestowing a thought on the fair sex; by and by she popped her head out of her place of refuge with the pretty question, 'Good folks, can you tell when the ravishing is going to begin?' I am sure I shall neither hide myself to avoid applause, which probably no one will think of conferring, nor have the meanness to do anything which can indicate any desire of ravishment. I have seen, when the late Lord Erskine entered the Edinburgh theatre, papers distributed in the boxes to mendicate a round of applause—the natural reward of a poor player.

" October 31. - At breakfast visited by M. Gallois, an elderly Frenchman (always the most agreeable class), full of information, courteous, and communicative. He had seen nearly, and remarked deeply, and spoke frankly, though with dne caution. He went with us to the Museum, where I think the Hall of Sculpture continues to be a fine thing - that of Pictures but tolerable, when we reflect upon 1815. A number of great French daubs (comparatively), by David and Gerard, cover the walls once occupied by the Italian chefs-d'œuvre. Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum. We then visited Nôtre Dame and the Palace of Justice. The latter is accounted the oldest building in Paris, being the work of St. Louis. It is, however, in the interior, adapted to the taste of Louis XIV. We drove over the Pont Neuf, and visited the fine quays, which was all we could make out to-day, as I was afraid to fatigue Anne. When we returned home, I found Count Pozzo di Borgo waiting for me, a personable man, inclined to be rather corpulent - handsome features, with all the Corsican fire in his eyes. He was quite kind and communicative. Lord Granville had also called, and sent his Secretary to invite us to dinner to-morrow. In the evening at the Odeon, where we saw Iranhoe. It was superbly got up, the Norman

soldiers wearing pointed helmets and what resembled much hauberks of mail, which looked very well. The number of the attendants, and the skill with which they were moved and grouped on the stage, were well worthy of notice. It was an opera, and, of course, the story sadly mangled, and the dialogue, in great part, nonsense. Yet it was strange to hear anything like the words which I (then in agony of pain with spasms in my stomach) dictated to William Laidlaw at Abbotsford, now recited in a foreign tongue, and for the amusement of a strange people. I little thought to have survived the completing of this novel.

"November 1. — I suppose the ravishing is going to begin, for we have had the Dames des Halles, with a bouquet like a maypole, and a speech full of honey and oil, which cost me ten francs; also a small worshipper, who would not leave his name, but came seulement pour avoir le plaisir, la felicité, &c. &c. All this jargon I answer with corresponding blarney of my own, for have I not licked the black stone of that ancient castle? As to French, I speak it as it comes, and like Doeg in Absalom and Achitophel —

dash on through thick and thin,
Through sense and nonsense, never out nor in.

We went this morning with M. Gallois to the Church of St. Genevieve, and thence to the College Henri IV., where I saw once more my old friend Chevalier. He was unwell, swathed in a turban of nightcaps and a multiplicity of robes de chambre; but he had all the heart and vivacity of former times. I was truly glad to see the kind old man. We were unlucky in our day for sights, this being a high festival—All Souls' Day. We were not allowed to scale the steeple of St. Genevieve, neither could we see the animals at the Jardin des Plantes, who, though they have no souls, it is supposed, and no interest, of course, in the devotions of the day, observe it in strict retreat, like the nuns of Kilkenny. I met, however, one lioness walking at large in the Jardin, and was

introduced. This was Madame de Souza, the authoress of some well-known French romances of a very classical character, I am told, for I have never read them. She must have been beautiful, and is still well-looked. She is the mother of the handsome Count de Flahault, and had a very well-looking daughter with her, besides a son or two. She was very agreeable. We are to meet again. The day becoming decidedly rainy, we returned along the Boulevards by the Bridge of Austerlitz, but the weather spoiled the fine show.

"We dined at the Ambassador, Lord Granville's. habits the same splendid house which Lord Castlereagh had in 1815, namely, Numero 30, Rue de Fauxbourg St. Honoré. It once belonged to Pauline Borghese, and, if its walls could speak, they might tell us mighty curious stories. Without their having any tongue, they speak to my feelings ' with most miraculous organ.' * In these halls I had often seen and conversed familiarly with many of the great and powerful, who won the world by their swords, and divided it by their counsel. There I saw very much of poor Lord Castlereagh - a man of sense, presence of mind, and fortitude, which carried him through many an affair of critical moment, when finer talents would have stuck in the mire. He had been, I think, indifferently educated, and his mode of speaking being far from logical or correct, he was sometimes in danger of becoming almost ridiculous, in despite of his lofty presence, which had all the grace of the Seymours, and his determined courage. But then he was always up to the occasion, and upon important matters was an orator to convince, if not to delight his hearers. He is gone, and my friend * * * * * * * also, whose kindness this town so strongly recalls. It is remarkable they were the only persons of sense and credibility who both attested supernatural appearances on their own evidence, and both died in the same melancholy manner. I shall always tremble when any friend of mine becomes visionary. I have seen in these rooms the Emperor Alexander, Platoff,



^{*} Hamlet, Act II. Scene 2.

Schwartzenberg, Old Blucher, Fouché, and many a marshal whose truncheon had guided armies - all now at peace, without subjects, without dominion, and where their past life, perhaps, seems but the recollection of a feverish dream. What a group would this band have made in the gloomy regions described in the Odyssey! But to lesser things. We were most kindly received by Lord and Lady Granville, and met many friends, some of them having been guests at Abbotsford; among these were Lords Ashley and Morpeth - there were also Charles Ellis (Lord Seaford now), cum plurimis aliis. Anne saw for the first time an entertainment à la mode de France, where the gentlemen left the parlour with the ladies. In diplomatic houses it is a good way of preventing political discussion, which John Bull is always apt to introduce with the second bottle. We left early, and came home at ten, much pleased with Lord and Lady Granville's kindness, though it was to be expected, as our recommendation came from Windsor.

"November 2. — Another gloomy day — a pize upon it! — and we have settled to go to St. Cloud, and dine, if possible, with the Drummonds at Auteuil. Besides, I expect poor Spencer * to breakfast. There is another thought which depresses me. Well—but let us jot down a little politics, as my book has a pretty firm lock. The Whigs may say what they please, but I think the Bourbons will stand. M. * * * *, no great Royalist, says that the Duke of Orleans lives on the best terms with the reigning family, which is wise on his part, for the golden fruit may ripen and fall of itself, but it would be dangerous to

* The late Honourable William Robert Spencer, the best writer of vers de societé in our time, and one of the most charming of companions, was exactly Sir Walter's contemporary, and like him first attracted notice by a version of Bürger's Lenore. Like him, too, this remarkable man fell into pecuniary distress in the disastrous year 1825, and he was now an involuntary resident in Paris, where he died in October 1834, ann. welat. 65.

'Lend the crowd his arm to shake the tree.' *

The army, which was Buonaparte's strength, is now very much changed by the gradual influence of time, which has removed many, and made invalids of many more. The artisans are neutral, and if the King will govern according to the Charte, and, what is still more, according to the habits of the people, he will sit firm enough, and the constitution will gradually attain more and more reverence as age gives it authority, and distinguishes it from those temporary and ephemeral governments, which seemed only set up to be pulled down. The most dangerous point in the present state of France is that of religion. It is, no doubt, excellent in the Bourbons to desire to make France a religious country; but they begin, I think, at the wrong end. To press the observancy and ritual of religion on those who are not influenced by its doctrines, is planting the growing tree with its head downwards. Rites are sanctified by belief; but belief can never arise out of an enforced observance of ceremonies; it only makes men detest what is imposed on them by compulsion. Then these Jesuits, who constitute emphatically an imperium in imperio, labouring first for the benefit of their own order, and next for that of the Roman See - what is it but the introduction into France of a foreign influence, whose interest may often run counter to the general welfare of the kingdom?

"We have enough of ravishment. M. Meurice writes me that he is ready to hang himself that we did not find accommodation at his hotel; and Madame Mirbel came almost on her knees to have permission to take my portrait. I was cruel; but, seeing her weeping ripe, consented she should come to-morrow and work while I wrote. A Russian Princess Galitzin, too, demands to see me, in the heroic vein; 'Elle vouloit traverser les mers pour aller voir S. W. S.,'† &c.,—

Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel — Character of Shaftesbury.

[†] S. W. S. stands very often in this Diary for Sir Walter Scott.

This is done in sportive allusion to the following trait of Tom Purdie:

— The morning after the news of Scott's baronetcy reached Abbotsford, Tom was not to be found in any of his usual haunts: he revol. VIII.

and offers me a rendezvous at my hotel. This is precious tom-foolery; however, it is better than being neglected like a fallen sky-rocket, which seemed like to be my fate last year.

"We went to St. Cloud with my old friend Mr. Drummond. now living at a pretty maison de campagne at Auteuil. Cloud, besides its unequalled views, is rich in remembrances. I did not fail to visit the Orangerie, out of which Boney expelled the Council of Five-Hundred. I thought I saw the scoundrels jumping the windows, with the bayonet at their rumps. What a pity the house was not two stories high! I asked the Swiss some questions on the locale, which he answered with becoming caution, saying, however, that 'he was not present at the time.' There are also new remembrances. A separate garden, laid out as a play-ground for the royal children, is called Trocadero, from the siege of Cadiz. But the Bourbons should not take military ground - it is firing a pop-gun in answer to a battery of cannon. All within the house is deranged. Every trace of Nap. or his reign totally done away, as if traced in sand over which the tide has passed. Moreau and Pichegru's portraits hang in the royal ante-chamber. The former has a mean physiognomy; the latter has been a strong and stern-looking man. I looked at him, and thought of his death-struggles. In the guard-room were the heroes of La Vendeé, Charette with his white bonnet, the two La Roche Jacquelins, l'Escures, in an attitude of prayer, Stofflet, the gamekeeper, with others.

"November 3.—Sat to Madame Mirbel — Spencer at breakfast. Went out and had a long interview with Marshal Macmained absent the whole day—and when he returned at night the mystery was thus explained. He and the head shepherd (who, by the by, was also butcher in ordinary), viz. Robert Hogg (a brother of the Bard of Ettrick), had been spending the day on the hill busily employed in prefixing a large S. for Sir to the W. S. which previously appeared on the backs of the sheep. It was afterwards found that honest Tom had taken it upon him to order a mason to carve a similar honourable augmentation on the stones which marked the line of division between his master's moor and that of the Laird of Kippilaw.

donald, the purport of which I have put down elsewhere. Visited Princess Galitzin, and also Cooper, the American novelist. This man, who has shown so much genius, has a good deal of the manners, or want of manners, peculiar to his countrymen. He proposed to me a mode of publishing in America, by entering the book as the property of a citizen. I will think of this. Every little helps, as the tod says, when, &c. At night, at the Theatre de Madame, where we saw two petit pieces. Le Marriage de Raison, and Le plus beau jour de Ma Vie - both excellently played. Afterwards, at Lady Granville's rout, which was as splendid as any I ever saw -and I have seen beaucoup dans ce genre. A great number of ladies of the first rank were present, and if honeyed words from pretty lips could surfeit. I had enough of them. One can swallow a great deal of whipped cream, to be sure, and it does not hurt an old stomach.

"November 4. — After ten I went with Anne to the Tuileries, where we saw the royal family pass through the Glass Gallery as they went to chapel. We were very much looked at in our turn, and the King, on passing out, did me the honour to say a few civil words, which produced a great sensation. Mad. la Dauphine and Mad. de Berri curtsied, smiled, and looked extremely gracious; and smiles, bows, and curtsies rained on us like odours, from all the courtiers and ladies of the train. We were conducted by an officer of the Royal Gardes du Corps to a convenient place in the chapel, where we had the pleasure of hearing the mass performed with excellent music.

"I had a perfect view of the royal family. The King is the same in age as I knew him in youth at Holyroodhouse,— debonair and courteous in the highest degree. Mad. Dauphine resembles very much the prints of Marie Antoinette, in the profile especially. She is not, however, beautiful, her features being too strong, but they announce a great deal of character, and the Princess whom Buonaparte used to call the man of the family. She seemed very attentive to her devotions. The

Duchess of Berri seemed less immersed in the ceremony, and yawned once or twice. She is a lively-looking blonde - looks as if she were good-humoured and happy, by no means pretty. and has a cast with her eyes; splendidly adorned with dismonds. however. After this, gave Madame Mirbel a sitting, where I encountered a general officer, her uncle, who was chef de l'etat major to Buonaparte. He was very communicative, and seemed an interesting person, by no means over much prepossessed in favour of his late master, whom he judged impartially, though with affection. We came home and dined in quiet, having refused all temptations to go out in the evening; this on Anne's account as well as my own. is not quite gospel, though Solomon says it — The eye can be tired with seeing, whatever he may allege in the contrary. And then there are so many compliments. I wish for a little of the old Scotch causticity. I am something like the bee that sips treacle.

"November 5. - I believe I must give up my journal till I leave Paris. The French are literally outrageous in their civilities - bounce in at all hours, and drive one half mad with compliments. I am ungracious not to be so entirely thankful as I ought to this kind and merry people. breakfasted with Mad. Mirbel, where were the Dukes of Fitz-James and Duras, &c. &c.; goodly company — but all's one for that. I made rather an impatient sitter, wishing to talk much more than was agreeable to Madame. Afterwards we went to the Champs Elvsées, where a balloon was let off, and all sorts of frolics performed for the benefit of the bons gens de Paris - besides stuffing them with victuals. I wonder how such a civic festival would go off in London or Edinburgh, or especially in Dublin. To be sure, they would not introduce their shilelahs! But, in the classic taste of the French, there were no such gladiatorial doings. To be sure, they have a natural good-humour and gaiety which inclines them to be pleased with themselves, and everything about them. We dined at the Ambassador's, where was a large party. Lord Morpeth, the Duke of Devonshire, and others — all very kind. Pozzo di Borgo there, and disposed to be communicative. A large soirée. Home at eleven. These hours are early, however.

" November 6. - Cooper came to breakfast, but we were obsedés partout. Such a number of Frenchmen bounced in successively, and exploded (I mean discharged) their compliments, that I could hardly find an opportunity to speak a word, or entertain Mr. Cooper at all. After this we sat again for our portraits. Madame Mirbel took care not to have any one to divert my attention, but I contrived to amuse myself with some masons finishing a facade opposite to me, who placed their stones, not like Inigo Jones, but in the most lubberly way in the world, with the help of a large wheel, and the application of strength of hand. John Smith of Darnick, and two of his men, would have done more with a block and pulley than the whole score of them. The French seem far behind in machinery. We are almost eaten up with kindness, but that will have its end. I have had to parry several presents of busts, and so forth. The funny thing was the airs of my little friend. We had a most affectionate parting - wet, wet cheeks on the lady's side. Pebble-hearted, and shed as few tears as Crab of doggish memory.*

"Went to Galignani's, where the brothers, after some palaver, offered £105 for the sheets of Napoleon, to be reprinted at Paris in English. I told them I would think of it. I suppose Treuttel and Würtz had apprehended something of this kind, for they write me that they had made a bargain with my publisher (Cadell, I suppose) for the publishing of my book in all sorts of ways. I must look into this.

"Dined with Marshal Macdonald † and a splendid party;

^{*} See the Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act II. Scene 3.

[†] The Marshal had visited Scotland in 1825—and the Diarist then saw a good deal of him under the roof of his kinsman, Mr. Macdonald Buchanan.—He died 25th September 1840, at his domain of Courcelles, near Orleans, aged 75.

amongst others, Marshal Marmont — middle size, stout made, dark complexion, and looks sensible. The French hate him much for his conduct in 1814, but it is only making him the scape-goat. Also I saw Mons. de Molé, but especially the Marquis de Lauriston, who received me most kindly. He is personally like my cousin Colonel Russell. I learned that his brother, Louis Law,* my old friend, was alive, and the father of a large family. I was most kindly treated, and had my vanity much flattered by the men who had acted such important parts talking to me in the most frank manner.

"In the evening to Princess Galitzin, where were a whole covey of Princesses of Russia arrayed in tartan, with music and singing to boot. The person in whom I was most interested was Mad. de Boufflers, upwards of eighty, very polite, very pleasant, and with all the acquirements of a French court lady of the time of Mad. Sevigné, or of the correspondent rather of Horace Walpole. Cooper was there, so the Scotch and American lions took the field together. — Home, and settled our affairs to depart.

"November 7. — Off at seven — breakfasted at Beauvais, and pushed on to Amiens. This being a forced march, we had bad lodgings, wet wood, uncomfortable supper, damp beds, and an extravagant charge. I was never colder in my life than when I waked with the sheets clinging around me like a shroud.

"November 8. — We started at six in the morning, having no need to be called twice, so heartily was I weary of my

* Lauriston, the ancient seat of the Laws, so famous in French history, is very near Edinburgh, and the estate was in their possession at the time of the Revolution. Two or three cadets of the family were of the first emigration, and one of them (M. Louis Law) was a frequent guest of the poet's father, and afterwards corresponded during many years with himself. I am not sure whether it was M. Louis Law whose French designation so much amused the people of Edinburgh. One brother of the Marquis de Lauriston, however, was styled Le Chevalier de Mutton-hole—this being the name of a village on the Scotch property.



comfortless couch. Breakfasted at Abbeville — then pushed on to Boulogne, expecting to find the packet ready to start next morning, and so to have had the advantage of the easterly tide. But, lo ye! the packet was not to sail till next day. So, after shrugging our shoulders — being the solace à la mode de France — and recruiting ourselves with a pullet and a bottle of Chablis à la mode d'Angleterre, we set off for Calais after supper, and it was betwixt three and four in the morning before we got to Dessein's, when the house was full, or reported to be so. We could only get two wretched brick-paved garrets, as cold and moist as those of Amiens, instead of the comforts which we were received with at our arrival.* But I was better prepared. Stripped off the sheets, and lay down in my dressing-gown, and so roughed it out — tant bien que mal.

"November 9. - At four in the morning we were called at six we got on board the packet, where I found a sensible and conversible man, a very pleasant circumstance. At Dover Mr. Ward came with the lieutenant-governor of the castle, and wished us to visit that ancient fortress. I regretted much that our time was short, and the weather did not admit of our seeing views, so we could only thank the gentlemen in declining their civility. The castle, partly ruinous, seems to have been very fine. The Cliff, to which Shakspeare gave his immortal name, is, as all the world knows, a great deal lower than his description implies. Our Dover friends, justly jealous of the reputation of their Cliff, impute this diminution of its consequence to its having fallen in repeatedly since the poet's time. I think it more likely that the imagination of Shakspeare, writing perhaps at a period long after he may have seen the rock, had described it such as he conceived it to have Besides, Shakspeare was born in a flat country, and Dover Cliff is at least lofty enough to have suggested the exaggerated features to his fancy. At all events, it has main-

* A room in Dessein'shotel is now inscribed "Chambre de Walter Scott"—another has long been marked "Chambre de Sterne."



tained its reputation better than the Tarpeian Rock — no man could leap from it and live. Left Dover after a hot luncheon about four o'clock, and reached London at half-past three in the morning. So adieu to la belle France, and welcome merry England.

"Pall-Mall, November 10. — Ere I leave la belle France, however, it is fit I should express my gratitude for the unwortedly kind reception which I met with at all hands. It would be an unworthy piece of affectation did I not allow that I have been pleased — highly pleased — to find a species of literature intended only for my own country, has met such an extensive and favourable reception in a foreign land, where there was so much à priori to oppose its progress. For my work I think I have done a good deal; but, above all, I have been confirmed strongly in the impressions I had previously formed of the character of Nap., and may attempt to draw him with a firmer hand.

"The succession of new people and unusual incidents has had a favourable effect on my mind, which was becoming rutted like an ill-kept highway. My thoughts have for sometime flowed in another and pleasanter channel than through the melancholy course into which my solitary and deprived state had long driven them, and which gave often pain to be endured without complaint, and without sympathy. 'For this relief,' as Marcellus says in Hamlet, 'much thanks.'

"To-day I visited the public offices, and prosecuted my researches. Left inquiries for the Duke of York, who has recovered from a most desperate state. His legs had been threatened with mortification; but he was saved by a critical discharge; — also visited the Duke of Wellington, Lord Melville, and others, besides the ladies in Piccadilly. Dined and spent the evening quietly in Pall-Mall.

"November 11.— Croker came to breakfast, and we were soon after joined by Theodore Hook, alias (on dit) John Bull—he has got as fat as the actual monarch of the herd. Lock-

hart sat still with us, and we had, as Gil Blas says, a delicious morning, spent in abusing our neighbours, at which my three neighbours are no novices any more than I am myself, though (like Puss in Boots, who only caught mice for his amusement) I am only a chamber counsel in matters of scandal. The fact is, I have refrained, as much as human frailty will permit, from all satirical composition. Here is an ample subject for a little black-balling in the case of Joseph Hume, the great accountant, who has managed the Greek loan so egregiously. I do not lack personal provocation (see 13th March last), yet I won't attack him — at present at least — but qu'il se garde de moi:

'I'm not a king, nor nae sic thing, My word it may not stand; But Joseph may a buffet bide, Come he beneath my brand.'

"At dinner we had a little blow-out on Sophia's part. Lord Dudley, Mr. Hay, Under Secretary of State, Sir Thomas Lawrence, &c. Mistress (as she now calls herself) Joanna Baillie, and her sister, came in the evening. The whole went off pleasantly.

"November 12.—Went to sit to Sir T. L. to finish the picture for his Majesty, which every one says is a very fine one. I think so myself; and wonder how Sir Thomas has made so much out of an old weather-beaten block. But I believe the hard features of old Dons like myself are more within the compass of the artist's skill than the lovely face and delicate complexion of females. Came home after a heavy shower. I had a long conversation about * * * with * * *. All that was whispered is true—a sign how much better our domestics are acquainted with the private affairs of our neighbours than we are. A dreadful tale of incest and seduction, and nearly of blood also—horrible beyond expression in its complications and events—'And yet the end is not;'—and this man was amiable, and seemed the soul of honour—laughed, too, and was the soul of society. It is a mercy

our own thoughts are concealed from each other. Oh! if, at our social table we could see what passes in each bosom around, we would seek dens and caverns to shun human society! To see the projector trembling for his falling speculations—the voluptuary rueing the event of his debauchery—the miser wearing out his soul for the loss of a guinea,—all—all bent upon vain hopes and vainer regrets,—we should not need to go to the hall of the Caliph Vathek to see men's hearts broiling under their black veils. Lord keep us from all temptation, for we cannot be our own shepherd!

"We dined to-day at Lady Stafford's, at Westhill. Lord S. looks very poorly, but better than I expected. No company, excepting Sam Rogers and Mr. Thomas Grenville, a very amiable and accomplished man, whom I knew better about twenty years since. Age has touched him, as it has doubtless affected me. The great lady received us with the most cordial kindness, and expressed herself, I am sure sincerely, desirous to be of service to Sophia.

"November 13. - I consider Charles's business as settled, by a private intimation which I had to that effect from Sir W. K.; so I need negotiate no farther, but wait the event. Breakfasted at home, and somebody with us, but the whirl of visits so great that I have already forgot the party. Lockhart and I dined at an official person's, where there was a little too much of that sort of flippart wit, or rather smartness, which becomes the parochial Joe Miller of boards and offices. You must not be grave, because it might lead to improper discussions: and to laugh without a joke is a hard task. Your professed wags are treasures to this species of company. Gil Blas was right in eschewing the literary society of his friend Fabricio; but nevertheless one or two of the mess could greatly have improved the conversation of his Commis. Went to poor Lydia White's, and found her extended on a couch, frightfully swelled, unable to stir, rouged, jesting, and dying. She has a good heart, and is really a clever creature, but unhappily, or rather happily, she has set up the whole staff of

her rest in keeping literary society about her. The world has not neglected her. It is not always so bad as it is called. She can always make up her circle, and generally has some people of real talent and distinction. She is wealthy, to be sure, and gives petit dinners, but not in a style to carry the point à force d'argent. In her case the world is good-natured, and perhaps it is more frequently so than is generally supposed.

- "November 14.— We breakfasted at honest Allan Cunning-ham's—honest Allan—a leal and true Scotsman of the old cast. A man of genius, besides, who only requires the tact of knowing when and where to stop, to attain the universal praise which ought to follow it. I look upon the alteration of 'It's hame and it's hame,' and 'A wet sheet and a flowing sea,' as among the best songs going. His prose has often admirable passages; but he is obscure, and overlays his meaning, which will not do now a-days, when he who runs must read.
- "Dined at Croker's, at Kensington, with his family, the Speaker.* and the facetious Theodore Hook.
- "We came away rather early, that Anne and I might visit Mrs. Arbuthnot to meet the Duke of Wellington. In all my life I never saw him better. He has a dozen of campaigns in his body—and tough ones. Anne was delighted with the frank manners of this unequalled pride of British war, and me he received with all his usual kindness. He talked away about Buonaparte, Russia, and France.
- "November 15.— I went to the Colonial Office, where I laboured hard. Dined with the Duke of Wellington. Anne could not look enough at the vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre. The party were Mr. and Mrs. Peel and Mr. and Mrs. Arbuthnot, Vesey Fitzgerald, Banks, and Croker, with Lady Bathurst and Lady Georgina. One gentleman took much of the conversation, and gave us, with unnecessary emphasis, and
- * The Right Honourable Sir Charles Manners Sutton, now Viscount Canterbury. [1839.]

at superfluous length, his opinion of a late gambling trans-This spoiled the evening. I am sorry for the occurrence though, for Lord * * * is fetlock deep in it, and it looks like a vile bog. This misfortune, with the foolish incident at * * *. will not be suffered to fall to the ground, but will be used as a counterpoise to the Greek loan. Peel asked mag in private, my opinion of three candidates for the Scotch gown, and I gave it him candidly. We shall see if it has weight.* I begin to tire of my gaieties; and the late hours and constant feasting disagree with me. I wish for a sheep'shead and whisky-toddy against all the French cookery and champaign in the world. Well, I suppose I might have been a Judge of Session by this time - attained, in short, the grand goal proposed to the ambition of a Scottish lawyer. It is better, however, as it is, - while, at least, I can maintain my literary reputation.

"November 16. - Breakfasted with Rogers, with my daughters and Lockhart. R. was exceedingly entertaining, in his dry, quiet, sarcastic manner. At eleven to the Duke of Wellington, who gave me a bundle of remarks on Buonaparte's Russian campaign, written in his carriage during his late mission to St. Petersburg. It is furiously scrawled, and the Russian names hard to distinguish, but it shall do me yeoman's Thence I passed to the Colonial Office, where I conservice. cluded my extracts. Lockhart and I dined with Croker at the Admiralty au grand couvert. No less than five Cabinet Ministers were present - Canning, Huskisson, Melville, Peel, and Wellington, with sub-secretaries by the bushel. The cheer was excellent, but the presence of too many men of distinguished rank and power always freezes the conversation. Each lamp shines brightest when placed by itself; when too close, they neutralize each other.†

^{*} Sir Walter's early friend Cranstoun was placed on the Scotch Bench, as Lord Corehouse, in 1826.

[†] In returning from this dinner Sir Walter said, "I have seen some of these great men at the same table for the last time."

"November 17. — Sir John Malcolm at breakfast. Saw the Duke of York. The change on H. R. H. is most wonderful. From a big, burly, stout man, with a thick and sometimes an inarticulate mode of speaking, he has sunk into a thin-faced, slender-looking old man, who seems diminished in his very size. I could hardly believe I saw the same person, though I was received with his usual kindness. He speaks much more distinctly than formerly; his complexion is clearer; in short, his Royal Highness seems, on the whole, more healthy after this crisis than when in the stall-fed state, for such it seemed to be, in which I remember him. God grant it!—his life is of infinite value to the King and country—it is a breakwater behind the throne.

"November 18. — Was introduced by Rogers to Mad. D'Arblay, the celebrated authoress of Evelina and Cecilia — an elderly lady, with no remains of personal beauty, but with a simple and gentle manner, a pleasing expression of countenance, and apparently quick feelings. She told me she had wished to see two persons — myself, of course, being one, the other George Canning. This was really a compliment to be pleased with — a nice little handsome pat of butter made up by a 'neat-handed Phillis'* of a dairy-maid, instead of the grease, fit only for cart-wheels, which one is dosed with by the pound.

"Mad. D'Arblay told us that the common story of Dr. Burney, her father, having brought home her own first work, and recommended it to her perusal, was erroneous. Her father was in the secret of Evelina being printed. But the following circumstances may have given rise to the story:—Dr. Burney was at Streatham soon after the publication, where he found Mrs. Thrale recovering from her confinement, low at the moment, and out of spirits. While they were talking together, Johnson, who sat beside in a kind of reverie, suddenly broke out—'You should read this new work, madam—you should read Evelina; every one says it is excellent,

^{*} Milton's L'Allegro.

and they are right. The delighted father obtained a commission from Mrs. Thrale to purchase his daughter's work, and retired the happiest of men. Mad. D'Arblay said she was wild with joy at this decisive evidence of her literary success, and that she could only give vent to her rapture by dancing and skipping round a mulberry-tree in the garden. She was very young at this time. I trust I shall see this lady again.

"Dined at Mr. Peel's with Lord Liverpool, Duke of Wellington, Croker, &c. The conversation very good, Peel taking the lead in his own house, which he will not do elsewhere.
..... Should have been at the play, but sat too long at Peel's. So ends my campaign amongst these magnificoes and 'potent seigniors,' * with whom I have found, as usual, the warmest acceptation.

" November 20. - I ended this morning my sittings to Lawrence, and am heartily sorry there should be another picture of me except that which he has finished. The person is remarkably like, and conveys the idea of the stout blunt carle that cares for few things, and fears nothing. He has represented the author as in the act of composition, yet has effectually discharged all affectation from the manner and attitude. He dined with us at Peel's vesterday, where, by the way, we saw the celebrated Chapeau de Paille, which is not a Chapeau de Paille at all. I also saw this morning the Duke of Wellington and the Duke of York; the former so communicative, that I regretted extremely the length of time. t but have agreed on a correspondence with him. Trop d'honneur pour moi. The Duke of York seems still mending, and spoke of state affairs as a high Tory. Were his health good, his spirit is as strong as ever. H. R. H. has a devout horror of the Liberals. Having the Duke of Wellington, the Chancellor, and (perhaps) a still greater person on his side, he might make a great fight when they split, as split they will. But Canning, Hus-

^{*} Othello.

[†] Sir Walter no doubt means that he regretted not having seen the Duke at an earlier period of his historical labours.

kisson, and a mitigated party of Liberaux, will probably beat them. Canning's wit and eloquence are almost invincible. But then the Church, justly alarmed for their property, which is plainly struck at, and the bulk of the landed interest, will scarce brook even a mild infusion of Whiggery into the Administration. Well, time will show.

"We visited our friends Peel, Lord Gwydir, Mr. Arbuthnot, &c. and left our tickets of adieu. In no instance, during my former visits to London, did I ever meet with such general attention and respect on all sides.

"Lady Louisa Stuart dined—also Wright and Mr. and Mrs. Christie. Dr. and Mrs. Hughes came in the evening; so ended pleasantly our last night in London.

"Oxford, November 20. — Left London after a comfortable breakfast, and an adieu to the Lockhart family. If I had had but comfortable hopes of their poor, pale, prostrate child, so clever and so interesting, I should have parted easily on this occasion; but these misgivings overcloud the prospect. We reached Oxford by six o'clock, and found Charles and his friend young Surtees waiting for us, with a good fire in the chimney, and a good dinner ready to be placed on the table. We had struggled through a cold, sulky, drizzly day, which deprived of all charms even the beautiful country near Henley. So we came from cold and darkness into light, and warmth, and society. — N.B. We had neither daylight nor moonlight to see the view of Oxford from the Maudlin Bridge, which I used to think one of the most beautiful in the world.

"The expense of travelling has mounted high. I am too old to rough it, and scrub it, nor could I have saved fifty pounds by doing so. I have gained, however, in health and spirits, in a new stock of ideas, new combinations, and new views. My self-consequence is raised, I hope not unduly, by the many flattering circumstances attending my reception in the two capitals, and I feel confident in proportion. In Scotland I shall find time for labour and for economy.

" Cheltenham, November 21. - Breakfasted with Charles in his chambers at Brazen-nose, where he had everything very neat. How pleasant it is for a father to sit at his child's board! It is like the aged man reclining under the shadow of the oak which he has planted. My poor plant has some storms to undergo, but were this expedition conducive to no more than his entrance into life under suitable auspices. I should consider the toil and the expense well bestowed. We then sallied out to see the lions. Remembering the ecstatic feelings with which I visited Oxford more than twenty-five years since. I was surprised at the comparative indifference with which I revisited the same scenes. Reginald Heber, then composing his Prize Poem, and imping his wings for a long flight of honourable distinction, is now dead in a foreign land - Hodgson * and other able men all entombed. The towers and halls remain, but the voices which fill them are of modern days. Besides, the eve becomes saturated with sights, as the full soul loathes the honeycomb. I admired indeed, but my admiration was void of the enthusiasm which I formerly felt. I remember particularly having felt, while in the Bodleian, like the Persian magician who visited the enchanted library in the bowels of the mountain, and willingly suffered himself to be enclosed in its recesses, while less eager sages retired in alarm. Now I had some base thoughts concerning luncheon, which was most munificently supplied by Surtees, at his rooms in University College, with the aid of the best ale I ever drank in my life, the real wine of Ceres, and worth that of Bacchus. Dr. Jenkyns,† the vice-chancellor, did me the honour to call, but I saw him not. Before three set out for Cheltenham, -a long and uninteresting drive, which we achieved by nine o'clock. My sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Scott, and her daughter, instantly came to the hotel, and seem in excellent health and spirits.

Dr. Frodsham Hodgson, the late excellent Master of Brazen-nose College.

[†] Dr. Richard Jenkyns, Master of Balliol College.

"November 22. — Breakfasted and dined with Mrs. Scott, and leaving Cheltenham at seven, pushed on to Worcester to sleep. — Nov. 28. Breakfasted at Birmingham and slept at Macclesfield. As we came in between ten and eleven, the people of the inn expressed surprise at our travelling so late, as the general distress of the manufacturers has rendered many of the lower classes desperately outrageous. — Nov. 24. Breakfasted at Manchester — pressed on — and by dint of exertion reached Kendal to sleep; thus getting out of the region of the stern, sullen, unwashed artificers, whom you see lounging sulkily along the streets in Lancashire. God's justice is requiting, and will yet farther requite, those who have blown up this country into a state of unsubstantial opulence, at the expense of the health and morals of the lower classes.

"Abbotsford, November 26. — Consulting my purse, found my good £60 diminished to Quarter less Ten. In purse, £8. Naturally reflected how much expense has increased since I first travelled. My uncle's servant, during the jaunts we made together while I was a boy, used to have his option of a shilling per diem for board wages, and usually preferred it to having his charges borne. A servant, now-a-days, to be comfortable on the road, should have 4s, or 4s, 6d, board wages, which before 1790 would have maintained his master. But if this be pitiful, it is still more so to find the alteration in my own temper. When young, on returning from such a trip as I have just had, my mind would have loved to dwell on all I had seen that was rich and rare, or have been placing, perhaps, in order, the various additions with which I had supplied my stock of information - and now, like a stupid boy blundering over an arithmetical question half obliterated on his slate, I go stumbling on upon the audit of pounds, shillings, and pence. Well. — the skirmish has cost me £200. I wished for information - and I have had to pay for it."-

11

On proceeding to Edinburgh to resume his official duties, Sir Walter established himself in a furnished house in Walker Street, it being impossible for him to leave his daughter alone in the country, and the aspect of his affairs being so much ameliorated that he did not think it necessary to carry the young lady to such a place as Mrs. Brown's lodgings. During the six ensuing months, however, he led much the same life of toil and seclusion from company which that of Abbotsford had been during the preceding autumn — very rarely dining abroad, except with one or two intimate friends, en famille — still more rarely receiving even a single guest at home; and, when there was no such interruption, giving his night as well as his morning to the desk.*

* Here ended the 6th Volume of the First Edition.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Life of Napoleon, and Chronicles of the Canongate in progress

— Reviewals of Mackenzie's Edition of Home, and of Hoffman's Tales — Rheumatic attacks — Theatrical Fund Dinner

— Avowal of the sole Authorship of the Waverley Novels —

Letter from Goethe — Reply — Deaths of the Duke of York,

Mr. Gifford, Sir George Beaumont, &c. — Mr. Canning

Minister — Completion of the Life of Buonaparte — Reminiscences of an Amanuensis — Goethe's Remarks on the

Work — its pecuniary results.

DEC. 1826 - JUNE 1827.

During the winter of 1826-7, Sir Walter suffered great pain (enough to have disturbed effectually any other man's labours, whether official or literary) from successive attacks of rheumatism, which seems to have been fixed on him by the wet sheets of one of his French inns; and his Diary contains, besides, various indications that his constitution was already shaking under the fatigue to which he had subjected it. Formerly, however great the quantity of work he put through his hands, his evenings were almost always reserved for the light reading of an elbow-chair, or the enjoyment of his family and friends. Now he seemed to grudge every minute that was not spent at the desk. The little that he read of new books, or for mere amusement, was done by snatches in the course of his meals; and to walk, when he could

walk at all, to the Parliament House, and back again through the Prince's Street Gardens, was his only exercise and his only relaxation. Every ailment, of whatever sort, ended in aggravating his lameness; and, perhaps, the severest test his philosophy encountered was the feeling of bodily helplessness that from week to week crept upon him. The winter, to make bad worse, was a very cold and stormy one. The growing sluggishness of his blood showed itself in chilblains, not only on the feet but the fingers, and his handwriting becomes more and more cramped and confused. I shall not pain the reader by extracting merely medical entries from his Diary; but the following give characteristic sketches of his temperament and reflections:—

"December 16. — Another bad night. I remember I used to think a slight illness was a luxurious thing. My pillow was then softened by the hand of affection, and the little cares put in exercise to soothe the languor or pain, were more flattering and pleasing than the consequences of the illness were disagreeable. It was a new scene to be watched and attended. and I used to think that the malade imaginaire gained something by his humour. It is different in the latter stages; - the old post-chaise gets more shattered and out of order at every turn - windows will not be pulled up, doors refuse to open, or being open will not shut again - which last is rather my case. There is some new subject of complaint every moment your sicknesses come thicker and thicker - your comforting and sympathizing friends fewer and fewer - for why should they sorrow for the course of nature? The recollection of youth, health, and uninterrupted powers of activity, neither improved nor enjoyed, is a poor strain of comfort. The best is, the long halt will arrive at last, and cure all. This was a day of labour, agreeably varied by a pain which rendered it scarce possible to sit upright. My journal is getting a vile

chirurgical aspect. I begin to be afraid of the odd consequences complaints in the post equitem are said to produce. I shall tire of my journal. In my better days I had stories to tell; but death has closed the long dark avenue upon loves and friendships, and I look at them as through the grated door of a burial-place filled with monuments of those who were once dear to me, with no insincere wish that it may open for me at no distant period, provided such be the will of God. My pains were those of the heart, and had something flattering in their character; if in the head, it was from the blow of a bludgeon gallantly received, and well paid back. I think I shall not live to the usual verge of human existence; I shall never see the threescore and ten, and shall be summed up at a discount. No help for it, and no matter either.

" December 18. - Sir Adam Fergusson breakfasted - one of the few old friends left out of the number of my youthful companions. In youth, we have many companions, few friends perhaps; in age, companionship is ended, except rarely, and by appointment. Old men, by a kind of instinct, seek younger associates, who listen to their stories, honour their grey hairs while present, and mimic and laugh at them when their backs are turned. At least that was the way in our day, and I warrant our chicks of the present brood crow to the same tune. Of all the friends that I have left here, there is none who has any decided attachment to literature. So either I must talk on that subject to young people - in other words, turn proser - or I must turn tea-table talker and converse with ladies. I am too old and too proud for either character, so I'll live alone and be contented. Lockhart's departure for London was a loss to me in this way."

He spent a few days at Abbotsford at Christmas, and several weeks during the spring vacation; but the frequent Saturday excursions were now out of the question—if for no other reason, on account of the quantity of



books which he must have by him while working at his Napoleon. He says on the 30th of December —

"Wrote hard. Last day of an eventful year; much evil and some good, but especially the courage to endure what -Fortune sends without becoming a pipe for her fingers.* It is not the last day of the year; but to-morrow being Sunday, we hold our festival to-day. - The Fergussons came, and we had the usual appliances of mirth and good cheer. Yet our party, like the chariot-wheels of Pharoah in the Red Sea, dragged heavily. - It must be allowed that the regular recurrence of annual festivals among the same individuals has, as life advances, something in it that is melancholy. We meet like the survivors of some perilous expedition, wounded and weakened ourselves, and looking through diminished ranks to think of those who are no more. Or they are like the feasts of the Caribs, in which they held that the pale and speechless phantoms of the deceased appeared and mingled with the living. Yet where shall we fly from vain repining? - or why should we give up the comfort of seeing our friends, because they can no longer be to us, or we to them, what we once were to each other?

"January 1, 1827. — God make this a happy new year tothe King and country, and to all honest men!

"I went to dine as usual at the kind house of Huntly Burn; but the cloud still had its influence. The effect of grief upon persons who, like myself and Sir Adam, are highly susceptible of humour, has, I think, been finely touched by Wordsworth in the character of the merry village teacher Matthew, whom Jeffrey profanely calls 'a half crazy sentimental person.'† But, with my friend Jeffrey's pardon, I think he loves to see imagination best when it is bitted and managed, and ridden upon the grand pas. He does not make allowance for starts and sallies, and bounds, when Pegasus is beautiful to

[†] See Edinburgh Review, No. xxiii. p. 135.



^{*} Hamlet, Act III. Scene 2.

behold, though sometimes perilous to his rider. Not that I think the amiable bard of Ryedale shows judgment in choosing such subjects as the popular mind cannot sympathize in. It is unwise and unjust to himself. I do not compare myself, in point of imagination, with Wordsworth — far from it; for his is naturally exquisite, and highly cultivated from constant exercise. But I can see as many castles in the clouds as any man, as many genii in the curling smoke of a steam-engine, as perfect a Persepolis in the embers of a sea-coal fire. My life has been spent in such day-dreams. But I cry no roastmeat. There are times a man should remember what Rousseau used to say, Tais-toi, Jean Jacques, car on ne t'entend pas!

"Talking of Wordsworth, he told Anne a story, the object of which, as she understood it, was to show that Crabbe had no imagination. Crabbe, Sir George Beaumont, and Wordsworth, were sitting together in Murray's room in Albemarle Street. Sir George, after sealing a letter, blew out the candle which had enabled him to do so, and exchanging a look with Wordsworth, began to admire in silence the undulating thread of smoke which slowly arose from the expiring wick, when Crabbe put on the extinguisher. Anne laughed at the instance, and inquired if the taper was wax, and being answered in the negative, seemed to think that there was no call on Mr. Crabbe to sacrifice his sense of smell to their admiration of beautiful and evanescent forms. In two other men I should have said, 'Why it is affectations,' with Sir Hugh Evans; * but Sir George is the man in the world most void of affectation; and then he is an exquisite painter, and no doubt saw where the incident would have succeeded in The error is not in you yourself receiving deep impressions from slight hints, but in supposing that precisely the same sort of impression must arise in the mind of men otherwise of kindred feeling, or that the common-place folk of the world can derive such inductions at any time or under any circumstances.

* Merry Wives of Windsor, Act I. Scene 1.

"January 13.— The Fergussons, with my neighbours Mr. Scrope and Mr. Bainbridge, ate a haunch of venison from Drummond Castle, and seemed happy. We had music and a little dancing, and enjoyed in others the buoyancy of spirit that we no longer possess ourselves. Yet I do not think the young people of this age so gay as we were. There is a turn for persiflage, a fear of ridicule among them, which stifles the honest emotions of gaiety and lightness of spirit; and people, when they give in the least to the expansion of their natural feelings, are always kept under by the fear of becoming ludicrous. To restrain your feelings and check your enthusiasm in the cause even of pleasure, is now a rule among people of fashion, as much as it used to be among philosophers.

"Edinburgh, January 15. — Off we came, and in despite of rheumatism I got through the journey tolerably. Coming through Galashiels, we met the Laird of Torwoodlee, who, on hearing how long I had been confined, asked how I bore it, observing that he had once in his life — Torwoodlee must be between sixty and seventy — been confined for five days to the house, and was like to hang himself. I regret God's free air as much as any man, but I could amuse myself were it in the Bastile.

"February 19. — Very cold weather. What says Dean Swift? ---

'When frost and snow come both together, Then sit by the fire and save shoe leather.'

I read and wrote at the bitter account of the French retreat from Moscow, in 1812, till the little room and coal fire seemed snug by comparison. I felt cold in its rigour in my childhood and boyhood, but not since. In youth and middle life I was yet less sensible to it than now—but I remember thinking it worse than hunger. Uninterrupted to-day, and did eight leaves.*

* One page of his MS. answers to from four to five of the close-printed pages of the original edition of his Buonaparts. "March 3.— Very severe weather, and home covered with snow. White as a frosted plum-cake, by jingo. No matter; I am not sorry to find I can stand a brush of weather yet. I like to see Arthur's Seat and the stern old Castle with their white watchcloaks on. But, as Byron said to Moore, d—nit, Tom, don't be poetical. I settled to Boney, and wrote right long and well.

"Abbotsford, March 12. — Away we set, and came safely to Abbotsford amid all the dulness of a great thaw, which has set the rivers a streaming in full tide. The wind is high, but for my part

'I like this rocking of the battlements.' *

I was received by old Tom and the dogs with the unsophisticated feelings of good-will. I have been trying to read a new novel which I had heard praised. It is called Almacks, and the author has so well succeeded in describing the cold selfish fopperies of the time, that the copy is almost as dull as the original. I think I shall take up my bundle of Sheriff-Court processes instead of Almacks, as the more entertaining avocation of the two.

"March 13.— Before breakfast, prepared and forwarded the processes to Selkirk. Had a pleasant walk to the thicket, though my ideas were olla-podrida-ish. I expect this will not be a day of work but of idleness, for my books are not come. Would to God I could make it light, thoughtless idleness, such as I used to have when the silly smart fancies ran in my brain like the bubbles in a glass of champaign — as brilliant to my thinking, as intoxicating, as evanescent. But the wine is somewhat on the lees. Perhaps it was but indifferent cyder after all. Yet I am happy in this place, where everything looks friendly from old Tom to young Nym.† After all, he has little to complain of who has left so many things that like him.



^{*} Zanga, in The Revenge, Act I. Scene 1.

[†] Nimrod - a stag-hound.

"March 21. — Wrote till twelve, then out upon the heights, though the day was stormy, and faced the gale bravely. Tom Purdie was not with me. He would have obliged me to keep the sheltered ground. There is a touch of the old spirit in me yet, that bids me brave the tempest — the spirit that, in spite of manifold infirmities, made me a roaring boy in my youth, a desperate climber, a bold rider, a deep drinker, and a stout player at single-stick, of all which valuable qualities there are now but slender remains. I worked hard when I came in, and finished five pages.

"March 26. — Despatched packets. Colonel and Captain Fergusson arrived to breakfast. I had previously determined to give myself a day to write letters; and this day will do as well as another. I cannot keep up with the world without shying a letter now and then. It is true, the greatest happiness I could think of would be to be rid of the world entirely. Excepting my own family, I have little pleasure in the world, less business in it, and am heartily careless about all its concerns.

"April 24. — Still deep snow — a foot thick in the courtyard, I dare say. Severe welcome for the poor lambs now coming into the world. But what signifies whether they die just now, or a little while after to be united with sallad at luncheon time? It signifies a good deal too. There is a period, though a short one, when they dance among the gowans, and seem happy. As for your aged sheep or wether, the sooner they pass to the Norman side of the vocabulary, the better. They are like some old dowager ladies and gentlemen of my acquaintance — no one cares about them till they come to be cut up, and then we see how the tallow lies on the kidneys and the chine.

"May 13.— A most idle and dissipated day. I did not rise till half-past eight o'clock. Colonel and Captain Fergusson came to breakfast. I walked half-way home with them, them

turned back and spent the day, which was delightful, wandering from place to place in the woods, sometimes reading the new and interesting volumes of Cyril Thornton, sometimes 'chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies' which alternated in my mind, idly stirred by the succession of a thousand vague thoughts and fears, the gay strangely mingled with those of dismal melancholy; tears which seemed ready to flow unbidden; smiles which approached to those of insanity; all that wild variety of mood which solitude engenders. I scribbled some verses, or rather composed them in my memory. The contrast at leaving Abbotsford to former departures, is of an agitating and violent description. Assorting papers, and so forth. I never could help admiring the concatenation between Ahithophel's setting his house in order and hanging himself.* The one seems to follow the other as a matter of course. But what frightens and disgusts me is those fearful letters from those who have been long dead, to those who linger on their wayfare through the valley of tears. Those fine lines of Spencer came into my head -

'The shade of youthful Hope is there,
That lingered long, and latest died;
Ambition all dissolved to air,
With phantom Honours by his side.
What empty shadows glimmer nigh?
They once were Friendship, Truth, and Love!
Oh! die to thought, to memory die,
Since lifeless to my heart ye prove.' †

Ay, and can I forget the author — the frightful moral of his own vision? What is this world? — a dream within a dream: as we grow older, each step is an awakening. The youth awakes, as he thinks, from childhood — the full-grown man despises the pursuits of youth as visionary — the old man looks on manhood as a feverish dream. The grave the last sleep? No; it is the last and final awakening.

^{* 2}d Samuel, xvii. 23.

[†] Poems by the late Honourable W. R. Spencer, London, 1835, p. 45. See ante, p. 144.

" Edinburgh, May 15. — It is impossible not to compare this return to Edinburgh with others in more happy times. But we should rather recollect under what distress of mind I took up my lodgings in Mrs. Brown's last summer. - Went to Court and resumed old habits. Heard the true history of -... Imagination renders us liable to be the victims of occasional low spirits. All belonging to this gifted, as it is called, but often unhappy class, must have felt, that but for the dictates of religion, or the natural recoil of the mind from the idea of dissolution, there have been times when they would have been willing to throw away life as a child does a broken tov. I am sure I know one who has often felt so. O God! what are we? - Lords of nature? - Why, a tile drops from a house-top, which an elephant would not feel more than the fall of a sheet of pasteboard, and there lies his lord-Or something of inconceivably minute origin - the pressure of a bone, or the inflammation of a particle of the brain - takes place, and the emblem of the Deity destroys himself or some one else. We hold our health and our reason on terms slighter than one would desire, were it in their choice, to hold an Irish cabin."

These are melancholy entries. Most of those from which they have been selected begin with R. for Rheumatism, or R.R. for Rheumatism Redoubled, and then mark the number of leaves sent to James Ballantyne—the proof-sheets corrected for press—or the calculations on which he reluctantly made up his mind to extend the Life of Buonaparte from six to seven, from seven to eight, and finally from eight to nine thick and closely printed volumes.

During the early months of 1827, however, he executed various minor tracts also: for the Quarterly Re-

^{*} Sir Walter had this morning heard of the suicide of a man of warm imagination, to whom, at an earlier period, he was much attached.

view, an article on Mackenzie's Life and Works of John Home, author of Douglas, which is, in fact, a rich chapter of Scott's own early reminiscences, and gives many interesting sketches of the literary society of Scotland in the age of which Mackenzie was the last honoured relic; * and for the Foreign Review, then newly started under the editorship of Mr. R. P. Gillies, an ingenious and elaborate paper on the writings of the German Novelist Hoffman.† This article, it is proper to observe, was a benefaction to Mr. Gillies, whose pecuniary affairs rendered such assistance very desirable. Scott's generosity in this matter -- for it was exactly giving a poor brother author £100 at the expense of considerable time and drudgery to himself - I think it necessary to mention; the date of the exertion requires it of me. But such, in fact, had been in numberless instances his method of serving literary persons who had little or no claim on him, except that they were of that class. I have not conceived it delicate to specify many instances of this kind; but I am at liberty to state, that when he wrote his first article for the Encyclopædia Supplement, and the editor of that work, Mr. Macvey Napier (a Whig in politics, and with whom he had hardly any personal acquaintance), brought him £100 as his remuneration, Sir Walter said - "Now tell me frankly, if I don't take this money, does it go into your pocket or your publisher's? for it is impossible for me to accept a penny of it from a literary brother." Mr. Napier assured him that the arrangements of the work were such, that the editor had nothing to do with the fund destined for contribu-Scott then pocketed his due, with the observa-



^{*} See Miscellaneous Prose Works, (Edin. Ed.) vol. xix. p. 283.

[†] Ibid. vol. xviii. p. 270.

tion, that "he had trees to plant, and no conscience as to the purse of his fat friend"—to wit, Constable.

At this period, Sir Walter's Diary very seldom mentions anything that could be called a dinner-party. He and his daughter partook generally once in every week the family meal of Mr. and Mrs. Skene; and they did the like occasionally with a few other old friends, chiefly those of the Clerks' table. When an exception occurs, it is easy to see that the scene of social gaiety was doubly grateful from its rarity. Thus one entry, referring to a party at Mr. J. A. Murray's, says - "Went to dine with John Murray, where met his brother (Henderland). Jeffrey, Cockburn, Rutherford, and others of that file. Very pleasant — capital good cheer and excellent wine -much laugh and fun. I do not know how it is, but when I am out with a party of my Opposition friends, the day is often merrier than when with our own set. Is it because they are cleverer? Jeffrey and Harry Cockburn are to be sure very extraordinary men; yet it is not owing to that entirely. I believe both parties meet with the feeling of something like novelty - we have not worn out our jests in daily contact. There is also a disposition on such occasions to be courteous, and of course to be pleased."

Another evening, spent in Rose Court with his old friend, Mr. Clerk, seems to have given him especial delight. He says—"This being a blank day at the Court, I wrote hard till dressing time, when I went to Will Clerk's to dinner. As a bachelor, and keeping a small establishment, he does not do these things often, but they are proportionally pleasant when they come

^{*} Afterwards Lord Advocate, and now a Judge of the Court of Session, by the title of Lord Murray. — [1839.]

round. He had trusted Sir Adam to bespeak his dinner, who did it con amore, so we had excellent cheer, and the wines were various and capital. As I before hinted, it is not every day that M'Nab mounts on horseback.* and so our landlord had a little of that solicitude that the party should go off well, which is very flattering to the guests. We had a very pleasant evening. The Chief-Commissioner was there, Admiral Adam, J. A. Murray, Tom Thomson, &c. &c., - Sir Adam predominating at the head, and dancing what he calls his merry-andrada in great style. In short, we really laughed, and real laughter is a thing as rare as real tears. I must say, too, there was a heart - a kindly feeling prevailed over the party. Can London give such a dinner? -- it may, but I never saw one -- they are too cold and critical to be easily pleased. - I hope the Bannatyne Club will be really useful and creditable. Thomson is superintending a capital edition of Sir James Melville's Memoirs. It is brave to see how he wags his Scots tongue, and what a difference there is in the form and firmness of the language, compared to the mincing English edition in which he has hitherto been alone known."

No wonder that it should be a sweet relief from Buonaparte and Blucher to see M'Nab on horseback, and Sir Adam Fergusson in his merry-andrada exaltation, and laugh over old Scotch stories with the Chief-Commissioner, and hear Mr. Thomas Thomson report progress as to the doings of the Bannatyne Club. But



^{*} That singular personage, the late M'Nab of that ilk, spent his life almost entirely in a district where a boat was the usual conveyance. I suspect, however, there is an allusion to some particular anecdote which I have not recovered.

I apprehend every reader will see that Sir Walter was misled by his own modesty, when he doubted whether London could afford symposia of the same sort. He forgets that he had never mixed in the society of London except in the capacity of a stranger, a rare visiter, the unrivalled literary marvel of the time, and that every party at which he dined was got up expressly on his account, and constituted, whoever might be the landlord, on the natural principle of bringing together as many as the table could hold - to see and hear Sir Walter Scott. Hence, if he dined with a Minister of State, he was likely to find himself seated with half the Cabinet - if with a Bishop, half the Bench had been collected. As a matter of course, every man was anxious to gratify on so rare an occasion as many as he could of those who, in case they were uninvited, would be likely to reproach him for the omission. The result was a crowding together of too many rival eminences; and he very seldom, indeed, witnessed the delightful result so constantly produced in London by the intermingling of distinguished persons of various classes, full of facts and views new to each other - and neither chilled nor perplexed by the pernicious and degrading trickery of lionizing. But, besides, it was unfair to institute any comparison between the society of comparative strangers and that of old friends dear from boyhood. He could not have his Clerks and Fergussons both in Edinburgh and in London. Enough, however, of commentary on a very plain text.

That season was further enlivened by one public dinner, and this, though very briefly noticed in Scott's Diary, occupied a large space in public attention at the time, and, I believe I may add, several columns in every newspaper printed in Europe. His good friend William Murray, manager of the Edinburgh Theatre, invited him to preside at the first festival of a charitable fund then instituted for the behoof of decayed performers. He agreed, and says in his Journal—

"There are 300 tickets given out. I fear it will be uncomfortable; and whatever the stoics may say, a bad dinner throws cold water on charity. I have agreed to preside—a situation in which I have been rather felicitous, not by much superiority of art or wisdom, far less of eloquence; but by two or three simple rules, which I put down here for the benefit of my posterity:—

"-1st, Always hurry the bottle round for five or six rounds, without prosing yourself, or permitting others to prose. A slight fillip of wine inclines people to be pleased, and removes the nervousness which prevents men from speaking — disposes them, in short, to be amusing and to be amused.

2d, Push on, keep moving, as Young Rapid says.* Do not think of saying fine things - nobody cares for them any more than for fine music, which is often too liberally bestowed on such occasions. - Speak at all ventures, and attempt the mot pour rire. You will find people satisfied with wonderfully indifferent jokes, if you can but hit the taste of the company, which depends much on its character. Even a very high party, primed with all the cold irony and non est tanti feelings or no feelings of fashionable folks, may be stormed by a jovial, rough, round, and ready preses. Choose your text with discretion - the sermon may be as you like. Should a drunkard or an ass break in with anything out of joint, if you can parry it with a jest, good and well - if not, do not exert your serious authority, unless it is something very bad. The authority even of a chairman ought to be very cautiously exercised. With patience you will have the support of every one.

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^{*} Morton's comedy of A Cure for the Heart-Ache.

"3dly, When you have drunk a few glasses to play the good-fellow, and banish modesty — (if you are unlucky enough to have such a troublesome companion) — then beware of the cup too much. Nothing is so ridiculous as a drunken preses.

"Lastly, always speak short, and Skeoch doch na skiel — cut a tale with a drink.

"This is the purpose and intent
Of gude Schir Walter's testament." *

This dinner took place on Friday the 23d February. Sir Walter took the chair, being supported by the Earl of Fife, Lord Meadowbank, Sir John Hope of Pinkie, Admiral Adam, Robert Dundas of Arniston, Peter Robertson, and many other personal friends. Lord Meadowbank had come on short notice, and was asked abruptly on his arrival to take a toast which had been destined for a noble person who had not been able to appear. knew that this was the first public dinner at which the object of this toast had appeared since his misfortunes, and taking him aside in the anteroom, asked him whether he would consider it indelicate to hazard a disfinct reference to the parentage of the Waverley Novels, as to which there had, in point of fact, ceased to be any obscurity from the hour of Constable's failure. Sir Walter smiled, and said, "Do just as you like - only don't say much about so old a story." - In the course of the evening the Judge rose accordingly, and said - +

- "I would beg leave to propose a toast the health of one of the Patrons a great and distinguished individual, whose
- * Sir Walter parodies the conclusion of King Robert the Bruce's Maxims, or Political Testament. See Hailes's Annals, A. D. 1311,—or Fordun's Scoti-chronicon, XII. 10.
- † By the favour of a friend, who took notes at this dinner, I am enabled to give a better report of these speeches than that of the contemporary newspapers.



name must always stand by itself, and which, in an assembly such as this, or in any other assembly of Scotsmen, must ever be received, I will not say with ordinary feelings of pleasure or of delight, but with those of rapture and enthusiasm. doing this I feel that I stand in a somewhat new situation. Whoever had been called upon to propose the health of my Hon. Friend some time ago, would have found himself enabled, from the mystery in which certain matters were involved, to gratify himself and his auditors by allusions sure to find a responding chord in their own feelings, and to deal in the language, the sincere language, of panegyric, without intruding on the modesty of the great individual to whom I refer. But it is no longer possible, consistently with the respect due to my auditors, to use upon this subject terms either of mystification, or of obscure or indirect allusion. The clouds have been dispelled - the darkness visible has been cleared away - and the Great Unknown — the minstrel of our native land — the mighty magician who has rolled back the current of time, and conjured up before our living senses the men and the manners of days which have long passed away, stands revealed to the eyes and the hearts of his affectionate and admiring country-If I were capable of imagining all that belongs to this mighty subject - were I able to give utterance to all that as a man, as a Scotsman, and as a friend, I must feel regarding it, yet knowing, as I well do, that this illustrious individual is not more distinguished for his towering talents, than for those feelings which render such allusions ungrateful to himself, however sparingly introduced, I would on that account still refrain from doing what would otherwise be no less pleasing to myself than to those who hear me. But this I hope I may be allowed to say — (my auditors would not pardon me were I to say less) - we owe to him, as a people, a large and heavy debt of gratitude. He it is who has opened to foreigners the grand and characteristic beauties of our country; - it is to him that we owe that our gallant ancestors and illustrious patriots - who fought and bled in order to obtain and secure that independence and that liberty we now enjoy - have obtained a fame

no longer confined to the boundaries of a remote and comparatively obscure country—it is *He* who has called down upon their struggles for glory and freedom the admiration of foreign lands;—he it is who has conferred a new reputation on our national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name, were it only by her having given birth to himself. I propose the health of Sir Walter Scott."

Long before Lord Meadowbank ceased speaking, the company had got upon chairs and tables, and the storm of applause that ensued was deafening. When they recovered from the first fever of their raptures, Sir Walter spoke as follows:—

"I certainly did not think, in coming here to-day, that I should have the task of acknowledging, before 300 gentlemen, a secret which, considering that it was communicated to more than twenty people, has been remarkably well kept. I am now at the bar of my country, and may be understood to be on trial before Lord Meadowbank as an offender; and so quietly did all who were airt and pairt conduct themselves, that I am sure that, were the panel now to stand on his defence, every impartial jury would bring in a verdict of Not Proven. I am willing, however, to plead guilty - nor shall I detain the Court by a long explanation why my confession has been so long deferred. Perhaps caprice might have a considerable share in the matter. I have now to say, however, that the merits of these works, if they had any, and their faults, are all entirely imputable to myself. Like another Scottish criminal of more consequence, one Macbeth,

> 'I am afraid to think what I have done; Look on't again I dare not.'

"I have thus far unbosomed myself, and I know that my confession will be reported to the public. I mean, then, seriously to state, that when I say I am the author, I mean the total and undivided author. With the exception of quotations,

there is not a single word that was not derived from myself. or suggested in the course of my reading. The wand is now broken, and the book buried. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, it is your breath that has filled my sails, and to crave one single toast in the capacity of the author of these novels. I would fain dedicate a bumper to the health of one who has represented several of those characters, of which I had endeavoured to give the skeleton, with a truth and liveliness for which I may well be grateful. I beg leave to propose the health of my friend Bailie Nicol Jarvie - and I am sure, that when the author of Waverley and Rob Rov drinks to Nicol Jarvie, it will be received with the just applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed. - nay, that you will take care that on the present occasion it shall be PRO - DI - GI - OUS!" (Long and vehement applause.)

MR. MACKAY. — "My conscience! My worthy father the deacon could never have believed that his son would hae sic a compliment paid to him by the Great Unknown!"

SIR WALTER SCOTT. — "The Small Known now, Mr. Bailie," &c. &c.

Shortly after resuming his chair, Sir Walter (I am told) sent a slip of paper to Mr. Robertson, begging him to "confess something too, — why not the murder of Begbie?" (See ante Vol. III. p. 260.) But if Peter complied with the hint, it was long after the senior dignitaries had left the room.

The "sensation" produced by this scene was, in newspaper phrase, "unprecedented." Sir Walter's Diary merely says—

"February 24. I carried my own instructions into effect the best I could, and if our jests were not good, our laughter was abundant. I think I will hardly take the chair again when the company is so miscellaneous; though they all behaved perfectly well. Meadowbank taxed me with the novels, and to end that farce at once, I pleaded guilty; so that splore is ended. As to the collection — it has been much cry and little woo, as the deil said when he shore the sow. I got away at ten at night. The performers performed very like gentlemen, especially Will Murray. — March 2. — Clerk walked home with me from the Court. I was scarce able to keep up with him; could once have done it well enough. Funny thing at the Theatre last night. Among the discourse in High Life below Stairs, one of the ladies' ladies asks who wrote Shakspeare. One says, 'Ben Jonson;' another, 'Finis.' 'No,' said Will Murray,* 'it is Sir Walter Scott; he confessed it at a public meeting the other day.'"

The reader may, perhaps, expect that I should endeavour to name the "upwards of twenty persons" whom Sir Walter alluded to on this occasion as having been put into the secret of the Waverley Novels, previously, and without reference, to the catastrophe of 1826. I am by no means sure that I can give the complete list: but in addition to the immediate members of the author's own family - (including his mother and his brother Thomas) - there were Constable, Cadell, the two Ballantynes -two persons employed in the printingoffice, namely Daniel M'Corkindale and Daniel Robertson - Mr. Terry, Mr. Laidlaw, Mr. Train, and Mr. G. H. Gordon - Charles Duke of Buccleuch, Lady Louisa Stuart, Lord Montagu, Lord and Lady Polwarth, Lord Kinnedder, Sir Adam Fergusson, Mr. Morritt, Mr. and Mrs. Skene, Mr. William Clerk, Mr. Hay Donaldson, Mr. Thomas Shortreed, Mr. John Richardson, and Mr. Thomas Moore.

The entries in Scott's Diary on contemporary litera-

^{*} For W. Murray, read Jones. — Note by Mr. Andrew Shortrede.—[1839.]

ture are at this time very few; nor are there many on the public events of the day, though the period was a very stirring one. He seems, in fact, to have rarely seen, even when in town, any newspaper except the Edinburgh Weekly Journal. At his age, it is not wonderful that when that sheet reached him it for the most part contained the announcement of a death which interested his feelings; and several of the following passages refer to incidents of this melancholy class:—

"January 9. - This morning received the long-expected news of the Duke of York's death. I am sorry both on public and private accounts. His R. H. was, while he occupied the situation of next in succession, a Breakwater behind the throne. I fear his brother of Clarence's opinions, may be different, and that he may hoist a standard under which men of desperate hopes and evil designs will rendezvous. I am sorry, too, on my own account. The Duke of York was uniformly kind to me, and though I never tasked his friendship, yet I find a powerful friend is gone. His virtues were honour, good sense, integrity; and by exertion of these qualities, he raised the British army from a very low ebb to be the pride and dread of Europe. His errors were those of a sanguine and social temper - he could not resist the temptation of deep play. which was fatally allied with a disposition to the bottle. last is incident to his complaint, which vinous influence soothes for the time, while it insidiously increases it in the end.

"January 17.—I observe in the papers my old friend Gifford's funeral. He was a man of rare attainments and many excellent qualities. His Juvenal is one of the best versions ever made of a classical author, and his satire of the Baviad and Mæviad squabashed at one blow a set of coxcombs, who might have humbugged the world long enough. As a commentator he was capital, could he but have suppressed his rancours against those who had preceded him in the task; but

a misconstruction or misinterpretation, nay, the misplacing of a comma, was in Gifford's eyes a crime worthy of the most severe animadversion. The same fault of extreme severity went through his critical labours, and in general he flagellated with so little pity, that people lost their sense of the criminal's guilt in dislike of the savage pleasure which the executioner seemed to take in inflicting the punishment. This lack of temper probably arose from indifferent health, for he was very valetudinary, and realized two verses, wherein he says Fortune assigned him —

Two sides that to their cost have stood
A ten years' hectic cough,
Aches, stitches, all the various ills
That swell the devilish doctor's bills,
And sweep poor mortals off.'

But he might also justly claim, as his gift, the moral qualities expressed in the next fine stanza —

That spurns the crowd's malign control,
A firm contempt of wrong;
Spirits above affliction's power,
And skill to soothe the lingering hour
With no inglorious song.'

He was a little man, dumpled up together, and so ill made as to seem almost deformed, but with a singular expression of talent in his countenance. Though so little of an athlete, he nevertheless beat off Dr. Wolcott, when that celebrated person, the most unsparing calumniator of his time, chose to be offended with Gifford for satirizing him in his turn. Peter Pindar made a most vehement attack, but Gifford had the best of the affray,* and remained, I think, in triumphant possession of the field of action, and of the assailant's cane. G. had one singular custom. He used always to have a duenna of a housekeeper to sit in his study with him while he

* See Epistle to Peter Pindar, Gifford's Bariad and Maviad, pp. 181-191, ed. 1812.

wrote. This female companion died when I was in London, and his distress was extreme. I afterwards heard he got her place supplied. I believe there was no scandal in all this.

"This is another vile day of darkness and rain, with a heavy yellow mist that might become Charing Cross—one of the benefits of our extended city; for that in our atmosphere was unknown till the extent of the buildings below Queen Street.

"January 28. — Hear of Miss White's death. Poor Lydia! she gave a dinner on the Friday before, and had written with her own hand invitations for another party. Twenty years ago she used to tease me with her youthful affectations — her dressing like the Queen of Chimney-sweeps on May-day morning, &c.; and sometimes with letting her wit run wild. But she was a woman of wit, and had a feeling and kind heart. Poor Lydia! I saw the Duke of York and her in London, when Death, it seems, was brandishing his dart over them.

'The view o't gave them little fright.'*

"February 10.— I got a present of Lord Francis Gower's printed but unpublished Tale of the Mill. It is a fine tale of terror in itself, and very happily brought out. He has certainly a true taste for poetry. I do not know why, but from my childhood I have seen something fearful, or melancholy at least, about a mill. Whether I had been frightened at the machinery when very young, of which, I think, I have some shadowy remembrance—whether I had heard the stories of the Miller of Thirlstane, and similar molendinar tragedies, I cannot tell; but not even recollections of the Lass of Patie's Mill, or the Miller of Mansfield, or 'he who dwelt on the river Dee,' have ever got over my inclination to connect gloom with a mill, especially when the sun is setting. So I entered into the spirit of the terror with which Lord Francis has invested his haunted spot.

* Burns's Twa Dogs.



"February 14.—'Death's gi'en the art an unco devel.'*
Sir George Beaumont's dead; by far the most sensible and pleasing men I ever knew—kind, too, in his nature, and generous—gentle in society, and of those mild manners which tend to soften the causticity of the general London tone of persiflage and personal satire. As an amateur painter, he was of the very highest distinction; and though I know nothing of the matter, yet I should hold him a perfect critic on painting, for he always made his criticisms intelligible, and used no slang. I am very sorry—as much as it is in my nature to be for one whom I could see but seldom. He was the great friend of Wordsworth, and understood his poetry, which is a rare thing, for it is more easy to see his peculiarities than to feel his great merit, or follow his abstract ideas.

. "A woman of rather the better class, a farmer's wife, was tried a few days ago for poisoning her maid-servant. There seems to have been little doubt of her guilt; but the motive was peculiar. The unfortunate girl had an intrigue with her son, which this Mrs. Smith (I think that is the name) was desirous to conceal, from some ill-advised Puritanic notions. and also for fear of her husband. She could find no better way of hiding the shame than giving the girl (with her own knowledge and consent, I believe) potions to cause abortion, which she afterwards changed for arsenic, as the more effectual silencing medicine. In the course of the trial one of the jury fell down in an epileptic fit, and on his recovery was far too much disordered to permit the trial to proceed. With only fourteen jurymen, it was impossible to go on. The Advocate says she shall be tried anew, since she has not tholed ane assize. Sic Paulus ait - et recte quidem. But, having been half-tried, I think she should have some benefit of it, as far as saving her life, if convicted on the second indictment. Lord Advocate declares, however, that she shall be hanged, as certainly she deserves. Yet it looks something like hanging up a man who has been recovered by the surgeons, which has always been accounted harsh justice.

"Death's gi'en the lodge an unco devel,
 Tam Sampson's dead." — Burns.



"February 20.—At Court, and waited to see the poisoning woman tried. She is clearly guilty, but as one or two witnesses said the poor wench hinted an intention to poison herself, the jury gave that bastard verdict, Not proven. I hate that Caledonian medium quid. One who is not proved guilty, is innocent in the eyes of law. It was a face to do or die, or perhaps to do to die. Thin features, which had been handsome, a flashing eye, an acute and aquiline nose, lips much marked as arguing decision, and I think bad temper—they were thin, and habitually compressed, rather turned down at the corners, as one of a rather melancholy disposition. There was an awful crowd; but, sitting within the bar, I had the pleasure of seeing much at my ease; the constables knocking the other folks about, which was of course very entertaining.

"I have a letter from Baron von Goethe, which I must have read to me; for though I know German, I have forgot their written hand. I make it a rule seldom to read, and never to answer foreign letters from literary folks. It leads to nothing but the battledore and shuttlecock intercourse of compliments, as light as cork and feathers. But Goethe is different, and a wonderful fellow—the Ariosto at once, and almost the Voltaire of Germany. Who could have told me thirty years ago I should correspond and be on something like an equal footing with the author of the Goetz? Ay, and who could have told me fifty things else that have befallen me?"

Goethe's letter (as nearly as the Editor can render it) runs thus:—

" To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Edinburgh.

"Weimar, January 12th, 1827.

"Mr. H---, well known to me as a collector of objects of art, has given me a likeness, I hope authentic and accurate,



of the late Lord Byron, and it awakens anew the sorrow which I could not but feel for the loss of one whom all the world prized, and I in particular: since how could I fail to be delighted with the many expressions of partiality for me which his writings contain?

"Meantime the best consolation for us, the survivors, is to look around us, and consider, that as the departed is not alone, but has joined the noble spiritual company of high-hearted men, capable of love, friendship, and confidence, that had left this sphere before him, so we have still kindred spirits on earth, with whom, though not visible any more than the blessed shades of past ages, we have a right to feel a brother-like connexion — which is indeed our richest inheritance.

"And so, as Mr. H—— informs me he expects to be soon in Edinburgh, I thus acquit myself, mine honoured sir, of a duty which I had long ago felt to be incumbent on me—to acknowledge the lively interest I have during many years taken in your wonderful pictures of human life. I have not wanted external stimulants enough to keep my attention awake on this subject, since not only have translations abounded in the German, but the works are largely read here in the original, and valued according as different men are capable of comprehending their spirit and genius.

"Can I remember that such a man in his youth made himself acquainted with my writings, and even (unless I have been misinformed) introduced them in part to the knowledge of his own nation, and yet defer any longer, at my now very advanced years, to express my sense of such an honour? It becomes me, on the contrary, not to lose the opportunity now offered of praying for a continuance of your kindly regard, and telling you how much a direct assurance of good-will from your own hand would gratify my old age.

"With high and grateful respect I salute you,

"J. W. v. GOETHE."

This letter might well delight Scott. Goethe, in writing soon afterwards to his friend Mr. Thomas Carlyle

(the translator of the Wilhelm Meister), described the answer as "cheering and warm-hearted."

"To the Baron von Goethe, &c. &c., Weimar.

"Venerable and much-respected Sir, - I received your highly-valued token of esteem by Mr. H-, and have been rarely so much gratified as by finding that any of my productions have been fortunate enough to attract the attention of Baron von Goethe, of whom I have been an admirer ever since the year 1798, when I became a little acquainted with the German language: and soon after gave an example at once of my good taste and consummate assurance, by an attempt to translate Goetz of Berlichingen, - entirely forgetting that it is necessary not only to be delighted with a work of genius, but to be well acquainted with the language in which it is written, before we attempt to communicate its beauty to others. I still set a value on my early translation, however, because it serves to show that I knew at least how to select an object worthy of admiration, although, from the terrible blunders into which I fell, from imperfect acquaintance with the language, it was plain I had not adopted the best way of expressing my admiration.

"I have heard of you often from my son-in-law Lockhart — I do not believe you have a more devout admirer than this young connexion of mine. My friend, Sir John Hope of Pinkie, has had more lately the honour of seeing you; and I hoped to have written to you — indeed, did use that freedom — by two of his kinsmen who were to travel in Germany, but illness intervened and prevented their journey, and my letter was returned after it was two or three months old; — so that I had presumed to claim the acquaintance of Baron von Goethe even before the flattering notice which he has been pleased to bestow on me. It gives to all admirers of genius and literature delight, to know that one of the greatest European models enjoys a happy and dignified retirement during an age which is so universally honoured and respected. Fate

destined a premature close to that of poor Lord Byron, who was cut off when his life was in the flower, and when so much was hoped and expected from him. He esteemed himself, as I have reason to know, happy in the honour which you did him, and not unconscious of the obligations which he owed to one to whom all the authors of this generation have been so much obliged, that they are bound to look up to him with filial reverence.

"I have given another instance that, like other barristers, I am not encumbered with too much modesty, since I have entreated Messrs. Treuttel and Würtz to find some means of conveying to you a hasty, and, of course, rather a tedious attempt to give an account of that remarkable person Napoleon, who had for so many years such a terrible influence in the world. not know but what I owe him some obligations, since he put me in arms for twelve years, during which I served in one of our corps of Yeomanry, and notwithstanding an early lameness, became a good horseman, a hunter, and a shooter. late these faculties have failed me a little, as the rheumatism, that sad torment of our northern climate, has had its influence on my bones. But I cannot complain, since I see my sons pursuing the sport I have given up. My eldest has a troop of Hussars, which is high in our army for a young man of twenty-five; my youngest son has just been made Bachelor of Arts at Oxford, and is returned to spend some months with me before going out into the world. God having been pleased to deprive me of their mother, my youngest daughter keeps my household in order, my eldest being married, and having a family of her own. Such are the domestic circumstances of the person you so kindly inquired after: for the rest, I have enough to live on in the way I like, notwithstanding some very heavy losses; and I have a stately antique chateau (modern antique) - to which any friend of Baron von Goethe will be at all times most welcome - with an entrancehall filled with armour, which might have become Jaxthausen itself, and a gigantic blood-hound to guard the entrance.

"I have forgot, however, one who did not use to be forgot-

ten when he was alive: — I hope you will forgive the faults of the composition, in consideration of the author's wish to be as candid toward the memory of this extraordinary man, as his own prejudices would permit. As this opportunity of addressing you opens suddenly by a chance traveller, and must be instantly embraced, I have not time to say more than to wish Baron von Goethe a continuance of health and tranquillity, and to subscribe myself, with sincerity and profound respect, his much honoured and obliged humble servant,

"WALTER SCOTT." *

I now insert a few entries from Sir Walter's Diary, intermixed with extracts from his letters to myself and Mr. Morritt, which will give the reader sufficient information as to the completion of his Life of Buonaparte, and also as to his impressions on hearing of the illness of Lord Liverpool, the consequent dissolution of the Cabinet, and the formation of a new Ministry under Mr. Canning.

DIARY—"February 21.—Lord Liverpool is ill of an apoplexy. I am sorry for it. He will be missed. Who will be got for Premier? If Peel would consent to be made a peer,

*I am indebted [1839] to the politeness of Goethe's accomplished friend Mrs. Jameson for a copy of this hasty letter; and I may quote in connexion with it the following passage from that lady's Winter Stadies and Rambles in Canada (1838), vol. i. p. 246:— "Everywhere Goethe speaks of Sir Walter Scott with the utmost enthusiasm of admiration, as the greatest writer of his time; he speaks of him as being without his like, as without his equal. I remember Goethe's daughter-in-law saying to me playfully— 'When my father got hold of one of Scott's romances, there was no speaking to him till he had finished the third volume; he was worse than any girl at a boarding-school with her first novel!'"

Mrs. Jameson says — "All Goethe's family recollect the exceeding pleasure which Sir Walter's letter gave him."



he would do; but I doubt his ambition will prefer the House of Commons. Wrought a good deal.

"April 16.—A day of work and exercise. In the evening a letter from L., with the wonderful news that the Ministry has broken up, and apparently for no cause that any one can explain. The old grudge, I suppose, which has gone on like a crack in the side of a house, enlarging from day to day, till down goes the whole."

" To John Lockhart, Esq., Wimbledon.

head turns round like a chariot-wheel, and I am on the point of asking

'Why, how now? Am I Giles, or am I not?'

The Duke of Wellington out? bad news at home, and worse abroad. Lord Anglesea in his situation?—does not much mend the matter. Duke of Clarence in the Navy?—wild work. Lord Melville, I suppose, falls of course—perhaps cum totâ sequelâ, about which sequela, unless Sir W. Rae and the Solicitor, I care little. The whole is glamour to one who reads no papers, and has none to read. I must get one, though, if this work is to go on, for it is quite bursting in ignorance. Canning is haughty and prejudiced—but, I think, honourable as well as able—nous verrons. I fear Croker will shake, and heartily sorry I should feel for that.".....

DIARY—"April 25.—I have now got Boney pegg'd up in the knotty entrails of St. Helena, and may make a short pause. So I finished the review of John Home's works, which, after all, are poorer than I thought them. Good blank verse, and stately sentiment, but something lukewarmish, excepting Douglas, which is certainly a masterpiece.



Even that does not stand the closet. Its merits are for the stage; and it is certainly one of the best acting plays going. Perhaps a play to act well should not be too poetical.

"April 26.— The snow still profusely distributed, and the surface as our hair used to be in youth, after we had played at some active game—half black, half white, all in large patches. I finished the criticism on Home, adding a string of Jacobite anecdotes, like that which boys put to a kite's tail. Received a great cargo of papers from Bernadotte—some curious, and would have been inestimable two months back, but now my task is almost done. And then my feelings for poor Count Itterberg, the lineal and legitimate, make me averse to have much to do with this child of the revolution."

" To J. G. Lockhart, Esq.

"April 26.

wonderful of my time, in a party point of view, especially as I can't but think all has turned on personal likings and dislikings. I hope they won't let in the Whigs at the breach, for I suppose, if Lansdowne come in, he must be admitted with a tail on, and Lauderdale will have the weight in Scotland. How our tough Tories may like that, I wot not; but they will do much to keep the key of the corn-chest within reach. The Advocate has not used me extremely kindly, but I shall be sorry if he suffers in this State tempest. For me, I remain, like the Lilliputian poet—'In amaze, Lost I gaze'—or rather, as some other bard sings—

So folks beholding at a distance Seven men flung out of a casement,
They never stir to their assistance,
But just afford them their amazement.'*

* Crazy Tales, by John Hall Stevenson.

VOL. VIII.

— You ask why the wheels of Napoleon tarry. Not by my fault, I swear;—

'We daily are jogging,
While whistling and flogging,
While whistling and flogging,
The coachman drives on,
With a hey hoy, gee up gee ho,' &c. &c. &c.

To use a more classical simile ---

'Wilds immeasurably spread Seem lengthening as I go.'*

I have just got some very curious papers from Sweden. I have wrought myself blind between writing and collating, and, except about three or four hours for food and exercise, I have not till to-day devauled † from my task.

O, Boney, I'll owe you a curse, if Hereafter
To my vision your tyrannous spectre shall show,
But I doubt you'll be pinned on old Nick's reddest rafter,
While the vulgar of Tophet howl back from below. . . .

I shall, however, displease Ultras such as Croker, on the subject of Boney, who was certainly a great man, though far from a good man, and still farther from a good king. But the stupidest Roitelet in Europe has his ambition and selfishness; and where will you find his talents? I own I think Ultrawriting only disgusts people, unless it is in the way of a downright invective, and that in history you had much better keep the safe side, and avoid colouring too highly. After all, I suspect, were Croker in presence of Boney to-morrow, he might exclaim, as Captain T. did at one of the Elba levees, 'Well, Boney's a d——d good fellow after all.'"

" To the Same.

"Abbotsford, May 10, 1827.

.... "To speak seriously of these political movements, I cannot say that I approve of the dissidents. I un-

* Goldsmith's Hermit.

† Anglicè, ceased.



derstand Peel had from the King carte blanche for an Anti-Catholic Administration, and that he could not accept it because there was not strength enough to form such. What is this but saying in plain words that the Catholics had the country and the Question? And because they are defeated in a single question, and one which, were it to entail no farther consequences, is of wonderfully little import, they have abandoned the King's service - given up the citadel because an exterior work was carried, and marched out into Opposition. I can't think this was right. They ought either to have made a stand without Canning, or a stand with him; for to abdicate as they have done was the way to subject the country to all the future experiments which this Catholic Emancipation may lead those that now carry it to attempt, and which may prove worse, far worse, than anything connected with the Question itself. Thus says the old Scotch Tory. But I for one do not believe it was the question of Emancipation, or any public question, which carried them out. I believe the predominant motive in the bosom of every one of them was personal hostility to Canning; and that with more prudence, less arbitrary manners, and more attention to the feelings of his colleagues, he would have stepped nem. con. into the situation of Prime Minister, for which his eloquence and talent naturally point him out. They objected to the man more than the statesman, and the Duke of Wellington. more frank than the rest, almost owns that the quarrel was personal. Now, acting upon that, which was, I am convinced. the real ground, I cannot think the dissidents acted well and wisely. It is very possible that they might not have been able to go on with Canning; but I think they were bound, as loyal subjects and patriots, to ascertain that continuing in the Cabinet with him as Premier was impossible, before they took a step which may change the whole policy, perhaps eventually the whole destiny of the realm, and lead to the prevalence of those principles which the dissidents have uniformly represented as destructive to the interests of Britain. I think they were bound to have made a trial before throwing Canning -

and, alas! both the King and the country — into the hand of the Whigs. These are the sort of truths more visible to the lookers-on than to those who play.

"As for Canning, with his immense talent, wit, and eloquence, he unhappily wants prudence and patience, and in his eager desire to scramble to the highest point, is not sufficiently select as to his assistants. The Queen's affair is an example of this - Lord Castlereagh's was another. In both he threw himself back by an over-eager desire to press forward, and something of the kind must have been employed now. cannot be denied that he has placed himself (perhaps more from compulsion than choice) in a situation which greatly endangers his character. Still, however, he has that character to maintain, and unluckily it is all we have to rest upon as things go. The sons of Zeruiah would be otherwise too many for us.* It is possible, though I doubt it, that the Whigs will be satisfied with their share of orts and grains, and content themselves with feeding out of the trough without overturning it. My feeling, were I in the House of Commons, would lead me to stand up and declare that I supported Canning so far, and so far only, as he continued to preserve and maintain the principles which he had hitherto professed - that my allegiance could not be irredeemably pledged to him, because his camp was filled with those against whom I had formerly waged battle under his command - that, however, it should not be mere apprehension of evil that would make me start off - reserving to myself to do what should be called for when the crisis arrived. I think, if a number of intelligent and able men were to hold by Canning on these grounds, they might yet enable him to collect a Tory force around him, sufficient to check at least, if not on all points to resist the course of innovation. If my old friend is wise, he will wish to organize such a force; for nothing is more certain than that if the champion of Anti-Jacobinism should stoop to become the tool of the Whigs, it is not all his brilliancy of talents, eloquence, and wit which can support him in such a glaring want of con-

* 2d Samuel, ii. 18.

sistency. Meliora spero. I do not think Canning can rely on his Whig confederates, and some door of reconciliation may open itself as unexpectedly as the present confusion has arisen."

DIARY - "May 11. - The boar of the Forest called this morning to converse about trying to get him on the pecuniary list of the Royal Literary Society. Certainly he deserves it, if genius and necessity can do so. But I do not belong to the society, nor do I propose to enter it as a coadjutor. I do not like your royal academies of this kind; they almost always fall into jobs, and the members are seldom those who do credit to the literature of a country. It affected, too, to comprehend those men of letters who are specially attached to the Crown. and though I love and honour my King as much as any of them can, yet I hold it best, in this free country, to preserve the exterior of independence, that my loyalty may be the more impressive, and tell more effectually. Yet I wish sincerely to help poor Hogg, and have written to Lockhart about it. It may be my own desolate feelings - it may be the apprehension of evil from this political hocus-pocus; but I have seldom felt more moody and uncomfortable than while writing these lines. I have walked, too, but without effect. W. Leidlaw, whose very ingenious mind is delighted with all novelties, talked nonsense about the new government, in which men are to resign principle, I fear, on both sides.

"Parliament House a queer sight. Looked as if people were singing to each other the noble song of 'The sky's falling—chickie diddle.' Thinks I to myself, I'll keep a calm sough.

'Betwixt both sides I unconcerned stand by — Hurt can I laugh, and harmless need I cry?'

"May 15. — I dined at a great dinner given by Sir George Clerk to his electors, the freeholders of Mid-Lothian; a great attendance of Whig and Tory, huzzaing each other's toasts.



If is a good peace-maker, but quarter-day is a better I have a guess the best game-cocks would call a truce, if a handful or two of oats were scattered among them.

"May 27. — I got ducked in coming home from the Court. Made a hard day of it; scarce stirred from one room to another, but by bed-time finished a hand-ome handful of copy. I have quoted Gourgaud's evidence; I suppose he will be in a rare passion, and may be addicted to vengeance, like a long-moustached son of a French bitch as he is.

'Frenchman, Devil, or Don,
Damn him let him come on,
He shan't scare a son of the Island.'*

"May 28. — Another day of uninterrupted study; two such would finish the work with a murrain. What shall I have to think of when I lie down at night and awake in the morning? What will be my plague and my pastime - my curse and my blessing - as ideas come and the pulse rises, or as they flag and something like a snow-haze covers my whole imagination? - I have my Highland Tales - and then - never mind sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. - Letter from John touching public affairs; don't half like them, and am afraid we shall have the Whig alliance turn out like the calling in of the Saxons. I told this to Jeffrey, who said they would convert us as the Saxons did the British. I shall die in my Paganism for one. I don't like a bone of them as a party. Ugly reports of the King's health; God pity this poor country should that be so, but I hope it is a thing devised by the enemy.

"June 3. — Wrought hard. I thought I had but a trifle to do, but new things cast up; we get beyond the Life, however, for I have killed him to-day. The newspapers are very saucy; the Sun says I have got £4000 for suffering a Frenchman to look over my manuscript. Here is a proper fellow for

^{*} Sir W. varies a verse of The tight little Island.

you! I wonder what he thinks Frenchmen are made of—walking money bags, doubtless. 'Now,' as Sir Fretful Plagiary says, 'another person would be vexed at this,' but I care not one brass farthing.

"June 5. — Proofs. Parliament House till two. Commenced the character of Buonaparte. To-morrow being a Teind-day, I may hope to get it finished.

"June 10. - Rose with the odd consciousness of being free of my daily task. I have heard that the fish-women go to church of a Sunday with their creels new washed, and a few stones in them for ballast, just because they cannot walk steadily without their usual load. I feel something like them, and rather inclined to take up some light task, than to be altogether idle. I have my proof-sheets, to be sure; but what are these to a whole day? A good thought came in my head to write Stories for little Johnnie Lockhart, from the History of Scotland, like those taken from the History of England. But I will not write mine quite so simply as Croker has done.* I am persuaded both children and the lower class of readers hate books which are written down to their capacity, and love those that are composed more for their elders and betters. I will make, if possible, a book that a child shall understand, yet a man will feel some temptation to peruse should he chance to take it up. It will require, however, a simplicity of style not quite my own. The grand and interesting consists in ideas, not in words. A clever thing of this kind might have a race."

^{*} The following note accompanied a copy of the First Series of the Tales of a Grandfather:—

[&]quot; To the Right Hon. J. W. Croker.

[&]quot;My Dear Croker, —I have been stealing from you, and as it seems the fashion to compound felony, I send you a sample of the swag, by way of stopping your mouth. Always yours,

[&]quot;W. Scott."

" To John B. S. Morritt, Esq., Portland Place, London.

" Edinburgh, June 10, 1827.

'My Dear Morritt, — Napoleon has been an absolute mill-stone about my neck, not permitting me for many a long day to think my own thoughts, to work my own work, or to write my own letters — which last clause of prohibition has rendered me thus long your debtor. I am now finished — valeat quod valere potest — and as usual not very anxious about the opinion of the public, as I have never been able to see that such anxiety has any effect in mollifying the minds of the readers, while it renders that of the author very uncomfortable — so vogue la galère.

"How are you, as a moderate pro-Catholic, satisfied with this strange alliance in the Cabinet? I own I look upon it with doubt at best, and with apprehensions. At the same time I cannot approve of the late Ministers leaving the King's councils in such a hurry. They could hardly suppose that Canning's fame, talent, and firm disposition would be satisfied with less than the condition of Premier, and such being the case—

'To fly the boar before the boar pursued,
Was to incense the boar to follow them.'*

On the other hand, his allying himself so closely and so hastily with the party against whom he had maintained war from youth to age seems to me, at this distance, to argue one of two things; — either that the Minister has been hoodwinked by ambition and anger — or that he looks upon the attachment of those gentlemen to the opinions which he has always opposed as so slight, unsubstantial, and unreal, that they will not insist upon them, or any of them, provided they are gratified personally with a certain portion of the benefits of place and revenue. Now, not being disposed to think overwell of the Whigs, I cannot suppose that a large class of British statesmen, not deficient certainly in talents, can be

* King Richard III. Act III. Scene 2.

willing to renounce all the political maxims and measures which they have been insisting upon for thirty years, merely to become placeholders under Canning. The supposition is too profligate. But then, if they come in the same Whigs we have known them, where, how, or when are they to execute their favourite notions of Reform of Parliament? and what sort of amendments will they be which are to be brought forward when the proper time comes? or how is Canning to conduct himself when the Saxons, whom he has called in for his assistance, draw out to fight for a share of the power which they have assisted him to obtain? When such strange and unwonted bedfellows are packed up together, will they not kick and struggle for the better share of the coverlid and blankets? Perhaps you will say that I look gloomily on all this, and have forgotten the way of the world, which sooner or later shows that the principles of statesmen are regulated by their advance towards, or retreat from power; and that from men who are always acting upon the emergencies of the moment, it is in vain to expect consistency. Perfect consistency, I agree, we cannot look for - it is inconsistent with humanity. But that gross inconsistency which induces men to clasp to their bosom the man whom they most hated, and to hold up to admiration the principles which they have most forcibly opposed, may gain a temporary triumph, but will never found a strong Ministry or a settled Government. My old friend Canning, with his talents and oratory, ought not, I think, to have leagued himself with any party, but might have awaited, well assured that the general voice must have carried him into full possession of power. I am sorry he has acted otherwise, and augur no good from it, though when or how the evil is to come I cannot pretend to say.

"My best compliments wait on your fireside. — I conclude you see Lady Louisa Stuart very often, which is a happiness to be envied. — Ever yours, most kindly,

"WALTER SCOTT."

I received, some years ago, from a very modest and intelligent young man, the late Mr. Robert Hogg (a nephew of the Ettrick Shepherd), employed in 1827 as a reader in Ballantyne's printing-office, a letter for which this is perhaps the most proper place.

" To J. G. Lockhart, Esq.

"Edinburgh, 16th February 1833.

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"Sir, — Having been for a few days employed by Sir Walter Scott, when he was finishing his Life of Buonaparte, to copy papers connected with that work, and to write occasionally to his dictation, it may perhaps be in my power to mention some circumstances relative to Sir Walter's habits of composition, which could not fall under the observation of any one except a person in the same situation with myself, and which are therefore not unlikely to pass altogether without notice.

"When, at Sir Walter's request, I waited upon him to be informed of the business in which he needed my assistance, after stating it, he asked me if I was an early riser, and added that it would be no great hardship for me, being a young man, to attend him the next morning at six o'clock. I was punctual, and found Sir Walter already busy writing. He appointed my tasks, and again sat down at his own desk. We continued to write during the regular work hours till six o'clock in the evening, without interruption, except to take breakfast and dinner, which were served in the room beside us, so that no time was lost; — we rose from our desks when everything was ready, and resumed our labours when the meals were over. I need not tell you, that during these intervals Sir Walter conversed with me as if I had been on a level of perfect equality with himself.

"I had no notion it was possible for any man to undergo the fatigue of composition for so long a time at once, and Sir Walter acknowledged he did not usually subject himself to so much exertion, though it seemed to be only the manual part of the operation that occasioned him any inconvenience. Once or twice he desired me to relieve him, and dictated while I wrote with as much rapidity as I was able. I have performed the same service to several other persons, most of whom walked up and down the apartment while excogitating what was to be committed to writing; they sometimes stopt too, and, like those who fail in a leap and return upon their course to take the advantage of another race, endeavoured to hit upon something additional by perusing over my shoulder what was already set down, - mending a phrase, perhaps. or recasting a sentence, till they should recover their wind. None of these aids were necessary to Sir Walter: his thoughts flowed easily and felicitously, without any difficulty to lay hold of them, or to find appropriate language; which was evident by the absence of all solicitude (miseria cogitandi) from his countenance. He sat in his chair, from which he rose now and then, took a volume from the bookcase, consulted it, and restored it to the shelf - all without intermission in the current of ideas, which continued to be delivered with no less readiness than if his mind had been wholly occupied with the words he was uttering. It soon became apparent to me, however, that he was carrying on two distinct trains of thought, one of which was already arranged, and in the act of being spoken, while at the same time he was in advance considering This I discovered by his what was afterwards to be said. sometimes introducing a word which was wholly out of place - entertained instead of denied, for example, - but which I presently found to belong to the next sentence, perhaps four or five lines farther on, which he had been preparing at the very moment that he gave me the words of the one that preceded it. Extemporaneous orators of course, and no doubt many writers, think as rapidly as was done by Sir Walter; but the mind is wholly occupied with what the lips are uttering or the pen is tracing. I do not remember any other instance in which it could be said that two threads were kept hold of at once -- connected with each other indeed, but grasped at different points. I was, as I have said, two or three days beside Sir Walter, and had repeated opportunities of observing the same thing. — I am, Sir, respectfully your obliged humble servant,

ROBERT HOGG."

The Life of Buonaparte, then, was at last published about the middle of June 1827. Two years had elapsed since Scott began it; but, by a careful comparison of dates, I have arrived at the conclusion that, his expeditions to Ireland and Paris, and the composition of novels and critical miscellanies, being duly allowed for, the historical task occupied hardly more than twelve months. The book was closely printed; in fact, those nine volumes contain as much letter-press as Waverley, Guy Mannering, the Antiquary, the Monastery, and the Legend of Montrose, all put together. If it had been printed on the original model of those novels, the Life of Buonaparte would have filled from thirteen to fourteen volumes:—the work of one twelvemonth—done in the midst of pain, sorrow, and ruin.

The magnitude of the theme, and the copious detail with which it was treated, appear to have frightened the critics of the time. None of our great Reviews grappled with the book at all; nor am I so presumptuous as to undertake what they shrunk from. The general curiosity with which it was expected, and the satisfaction with which high and candid minds perused it, cannot I believe be better described than in the words of the author's most illustrious literary contemporary.

"Walter Scott," says Goethe, "passed his childhood among the stirring scenes of the American War, and was a youth of seventeen or eighteen when the French Revolution broke out. Now well advanced in the fifties, having all along been favourably placed for observation, he proposes to lay before us his views and recollections of the important events through which he has lived. The richest, the easiest, the most celebrated narrator of the century, undertakes to write the history of his own time.

- "What expectations the announcement of such a work must have excited in me, will be understood by any one who remembers that I, twenty years older than Scott, conversed with Paoli in the twentieth year of my age, and with Napoleon himself in the sixtieth.
- "Through that long series of years, coming more or less into contact with the great doings of the world, I failed not to think seriously on what was passing around me, and, after my own fashion, to connect so many extraordinary mutations into something like arrangement and interdependence.
- "What could now be more delightful to me, than leisurely and calmly to sit down and listen to the discourse of such a man, while clearly, truly, and with all the skill of a great artist, he recalls to me the incidents on which through life I have meditated, and the influence of which is still daily in operation?"—Kunst und Altherthum.

The lofty impartiality with which Scott treats the personal character of Buonaparte was, of course, sure to make all ultra-politicians both at home and abroad condemn his representation; and an equally general and better founded exception was taken to the lavish imagery of his historical style. He despised the former clamour—to the latter he bowed submissive. He could not, whatever character he might wish to assume, cease to be one of the greatest of poets. Metaphorical illustrations, which men born with prose in their souls hunt for painfully, and find only to murder, were to him the natural

and necessary offspring and playthings of ever-teeming fancy. He could not write a note to his printer - he could not speak to himself in his Diary - without introducing them. Few will say that his historical style is, on the whole, excellent - none that it is perfect; but it is completely unaffected, and therefore excites nothing of the unpleasant feeling with which we consider the elaborate artifices of a far greater historian — the greatest that our literature can boast - Gibbon. The rapidity of the execution infers many inaccuracies as to minor matters of fact; but it is nevertheless true that no inaccuracy in the smallest degree affecting the character of the book as a fair record of great events, has to this hour been detected even by the malevolent ingenuity of Jacobin and Buonapartist pamphleteers. Even the most hostile examiners were obliged to acknowledge that the gigantic career of their idol had been traced, in its leading features, with wonderful truth and spirit. No civilian, it was universally admitted, had ever before described modern battles and campaigns with any approach to his daring and comprehensive felicity. The public, ever unwilling to concede a new species of honour to a name already covered with distinction, listened eagerly for a while to the indignant reclamations of nobodies, whose share in mighty transactions had been omitted, or slightly misrepresented; but, ere long, all these pompous rectifications were summed up — and found to constitute nothing but a contemptible monument of self-deluding vanity. The work, devoured at first with breathless delight, had a shade thrown over it for a time by the pertinacious blustering of these angry Lilliputians; but it has now emerged, slowly and surely, from the mist of suspicion - and few, whose opinions deserve much attention, hesitate to avow their conviction that, whoever may be the Polybius of the modern Hannibal, posterity will recognise his Livy in Scott.

Woodstock, as we have seen, placed upwards of £8000 in the hands of Sir Walter's creditors. The Napoleon (first and second editions) produced for them a sum which it even now startles me to mention — £18,000. As by the time the historical work was published, nearly half of the First Series of Chronicles of the Canongate had been written, it is obvious that the amount to which Scott's literary industry, from the close of 1825, to the 10th of June 1827, had diminished his debt, cannot be stated at less than £28,000. Had health been spared him, how soon must he have freed himself from all his encumbrances!

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Excursion to St. Andrews — Deaths of Lady Diana Scott,
Constable, and Canning — Extract from Mr. Adolphus's
Memoranda — Affair of General Gourgaud — Letter to Mr.
Clerk — Blythswood — Corehouse — Duke of Wellington's
Visit to Durham — Dinner in the Castle — Sunderland —
Ravensworth — Alnwick — Verses to Sir Cuthbert Sharp —
Affair of Abud & Co.— Publication of the Chronicles of
the Canongate, Series First — and of the first Tales of a
Grandfather — Essay on Planting, &c. — Miscellaneous
Prose Works collected — Sale of the Waverley Copyrights —
Dividend to Creditors.

JUNE - DEC. 1827.

My wife and I spent the summer of 1827, partly at a sea-bathing place near Edinburgh, and partly in Roxburghshire; and I shall, in my account of the sequel of this year, draw, as it may happen, on Sir Walter's Diary, his letters, the memoranda of friendly visitors, or my own recollections. The arrival of his daughter and her children at Portobello was a source of constant refreshment to him during June; for every other day he came down and dined there, and strolled about afterwards on the beach; thus interrupting, beneficially for his health, and I doubt not for the result of his labours also, the new custom of regular night-work, or, as he called it, of serving double-tides. When the Court released him, and he returned to Abbotsford, his family did what they

could to keep him to his ancient evening habits; but nothing was so useful as the presence of his invalid grandson. The poor child was at this time so far restored as to be able to sit his pony again; and Sir Walter, who had, as the reader has observed, conceived, the very day he finished Napoleon, the notion of putting together a series of stories on the history of Scotland, somewhat in the manner of Mr. Croker's on that of England, rode daily among the woods with his "Hugh Littlejohn," and told the tale, and ascertained that it suited the comprehension of boyhood, before he reduced it to writing. Sibvl Grev had been dismissed in consequence of the accident at the Catrail; and he had now stooped his pride to a sober, steady creature of very humble blood; dun, with black mane and legs; by name Douce Davie, alias the Covenanter. This, the last of his steeds, by the way, had been previously in the possession of a jolly old laird in a neighbouring county, and acquired a distinguished reputation by its skill in carrying him home safely when dead drunk. Douce Davie, on such occasions, accommodated himself to the swerving balance of his rider with such nice discrimination, that, on the laird's death, the country people expected a vigorous competition for the sagacious animal; but the club companions of the defunct stood off to a man when it was understood that the Sheriff coveted the succession.

The Chronicles of the Canongate proceeded pari passu with these historical tales; and both works were published before the end of the year. He also superintended, at the same time, the first collection of his Prose Miscellanies, in six volumes 8vo.—several articles being remodelled and extended to adapt them for a more permanent sort of existence than had been originally thought

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of. Moreover, Sir Walter penned, that autumn, his beautiful and instructive paper on the Planting of Waste Lands, which is indeed no other than a precious chapter of his autobiography, for the Quarterly Review.* What he wrote of new matter between June and December, fills from five to six volumes in the late uniform edition of his works; but all this was light and easy after the perilous drudgery of the preceding eighteen months.

The Blair-Adam Club, this year, had their head-quarters at Charleton, in Fife — the seat of the founder's son-in-law, Mr. Anstruther Thomson; and one of their drives was to the two ancient mansions of Ely and Balcaskie.

"The latter," says Sir Walter in his Diary, "put me in mind of poor Philip Anstruther, dead and gone many a long year since. He was a fine, gallant, light-hearted young sailor. I remember the story of his drawing on his father for some cash, which produced an angry letter from old Sir Robert, to which Philip replied, that if he did not know how to write like a gentleman, he did not desire any more of his correspondence. Balcaskie is much dilapidated; but they are restoring the house in the good old style, with its terraces and yew hedges."

Another morning was given to St. Andrews, which one of the party had never before visited.

"The ruins," he says, "have been lately cleared out. They had been chiefly magnificent from their size, not their richness in ornament.† I did not go up to St. Rule's Tower, as on



^{*} See Miscellaneous Prose Works (edition 1836) vol. xxi.

[†] I believe there is no doubt that the Metropolitan Cathedral of St. Andrews had been the longest in Europe—a very remarkable fact, when one thinks of the smallness and poverty of the country. It is stated, with minute calculations, and much exultation, by an old Scotch writer—Volusenus (i. e. Wilson)—in his once celebrated treatise De Tranquillitate Animi.

former occasions; this is a falling off, for when before did I remain sitting below when there was a steeple to be ascended? But the rheumatism has begun to change that vein for some time past, though I think this is the first decided sign of acquiescence in my lot. I sat down on a grave-stone, and recollected the first visit I made to St. Andrews, now thirty-four years ago. What changes in my feelings and my fortunes have since then taken place!—some for the better, many for the worse. I remembered the name I then carved in runic characters on the turf beside the castle-gate, and I asked why it should still agitate my heart. But my friends came down from the tower, and the foolish idea was chased away."

On the 22d of July, his Diary bears the date of *Minto*. He then says —

"We rubbed up some recollections of twenty years ago, when I was more intimate in the family, till Whig and Tory separated us for a time. By the way, nobody talks Whig or Tory just now, and the fighting men on each side go about muzzled and mute, like dogs after a proclamation about canine madness. Am I sorry for this truce or not? Half and half. It is all we have left to stir the blood, this little political brawling. But better too little of it than too much. - Here I have received news of two deaths at once; Lady Die Scott, my very old friend, and Archibald Constable, the bookseller." - He adds next day - "Yes! they are both, for very different reasons, subjects of reflection. Lady Diana Scott, widow of Walter Scott of Harden, was the last person whom I recollect so much older than myself, that she kept always at the same distance in point of age, so that she scarce seemed older to me (relatively) two years ago, when in her ninety-second year, than fifty years before. She was the daughter (alone remaining) of Pope's Earl of Marchmont, and, like her father, had an acute mind, and an eager temper. She was always kind to me, remarkably so indeed when I was a boy. - Constable's death might have been a most important thing to me

if it had happened some years ago, and I should then have lamented it much. He has lived to do me some injury; yet. excepting the last £5000, I think most unintentionally. He was a prince of booksellers; his views sharp, powerful, and liberal; too sanguine, however, and, like many bold and successful schemers, never knowing when to stand or stop, and not always calculating his means to his object with mercantile accuracy. He was very vain, for which he had some reason, having raised himself to great commercial eminence, as he might also, with good management, have attained great wealth. He knew, I think, more of the business of a bookseller, in planning and executing popular works, than any man of his time. In books themselves, he had much bibliographical information, but none whatever that could be termed literary. He knew the rare volumes of his library, not only by the eye, but by the touch, when blindfolded. Thomas Thomson saw him make this experiment, and that it might be complete, placed in his hand an ordinary volume instead of one of these libri rariores. He said he had overestimated his memory; he could not recollect that volume. Constable was a violent tempered man with those he dared use freedom with. He was easily overawed by people of consequence; but, as usual, took it out of those whom poverty made subservient to him. Yet he was generous, and far from bad-hearted: - in person good-looking, but very corpulent latterly; a large feeder, and deep drinker, till his health became weak. He died of water in the chest, which the natural strength of his constitution set long at defiance. I have no great reason to regret him; yet I do. If he deceived me, he also deceived himself."

Constable's spirit had been effectually broken by his downfall. To stoop from being primus absque secundo among the Edinburgh booksellers, to be the occupant of an obscure closet of a shop, without capital, without credit, all his mighty undertakings abandoned or gone

into other hands, except indeed his Miscellany, which he had now no resources for pushing on in the fashion he once contemplated — this reverse was too much for that proud heart. He no longer opposed a determined mind to the ailments of the body, and sunk on the 21st of this month, having, as I am told, looked, long ere he took to his bed, at least ten years older than he was. He died in his 54th year; but into that space he had crowded vastly more than the usual average of zeal and energy, of hilarity and triumph, and perhaps of anxiety and misery.

About this time the rumour became prevalent that Mr. Canning's health was breaking up among toils and mortifications of another order, and Scott's Diary has some striking entries on this painful subject. Meeting Lord Melville casually at the seat of a common friend towards the end of July, he says—

"I was sorry to see my very old friend, this upright statesman and honourable gentleman, deprived of his power, and his official income, which the number of his family must render a matter of importance. He was cheerful, not affectedly so, and bore his declension like a wise and brave man. Canning said the office of Premier was his by inheritance; he could not, from constitution, hold it above two years, and then it would descend to Peel. Such is ambition! Old friends for-saken—old principles changed—every effort used to give the vessel of the State a new direction,—and all to be Palinurus for two years!"

Of the 10th of August — when the news of Mr. Canning's death reached Abbotsford — and the day following, are these entries:—

"The death of the Premier is announced - late George

Canning — the witty, the accomplished, the ambitious; — he who had toiled thirty years, and involved himself in the most harassing discussions, to attain this dizzy height; he who had held it for three months of intrigue and obloquy — and now a heap of dust, and that is all. He was an early and familiar friend of mine, through my intimacy with George Ellis. No man possessed a gayer and more playful wit in society; no one, since Pitt's time, had more commanding sarcasm in debate: in the House of Commons he was the terror of that species of orators called the Yelpers. His lash fetched away both skin and flesh, and would have penetrated the hide of a rhinoceros. In his conduct as a statesman he had a great fault: he lent himself too willingly to intrigue. Thus he got into his quarrel with Lord Castlereagh, and lost credit with the country for want of openness. Thus, too, he got involved with the Queen's party to such an extent, that it fettered him upon that miserable occasion, and obliged him to butter Sir Robert Wilson with dear friend, and gallant general, and so forth. The last composition with the Whigs was a sacrifice of principle on both sides. I have some reason to think they counted on getting rid of him in two or three years. To me Canning was always personally most kind. I saw, with pain, a great change in his health when I met him at Colonel Bolton's, at Storrs, in 1825. In London last year I thought him looking better. My nerves have for these two or three last days been susceptible of an acute excitement from the slightest causes; the beauty of the evening, the sighing of the summer breeze, bring the tears into my eyes not unpleasantly. But I must take exercise, and case-harden myself. is no use in encouraging these moods of the mind.

"August 11. — Wrote nearly five pages; then walked. A visit from Henry Scott; nothing known as yet about politics. A High Tory Administration would be a great evil at this time. There are repairs in the structure of our constitution which ought to be made at this season, and without which the people will not long be silent. A pure Whig Administra-

tion would probably play the devil by attempting a thorough repair. As to a compound, or melo-dramatic Ministry, the parts out of which such a one could be organised just now are at a terrible discount in public estimation, nor will they be at par in a hurry again. The public were generally shocked at the complete lack of principle testified on the late occasion, and by some who till then had high credit. The Duke of Wellington has risen by his firmness on the one side, Earl Grey on the other."

He received, about this time, a third visit from Mr. J. L. Adolphus. The second occurred in August 1824, and since that time they had not met. I transcribe a few paragraphs from my friend's memoranda, on which I formerly drew so largely. He says—

"Calamity had borne heavily upon Sir Walter in the interval; but the painful and anxious feeling with which a friend is approached for the first time under such circumstances, gave way at once to the unassumed serenity of his manner. There were some signs of age about him which the mere lapse of time would scarcely have accounted for; but his spirits were abated only, not broken; if they had sunk, they had sunk equably and gently. It was a declining, not a clouded sun. I do not remember, at this period, hearing him make any reference to the afflictions he had suffered. except once, when, speaking of his Life of Napoleon, he said 'he knew that it had some inaccuracies, but be believed it would be found right in all essential points;' and then added, in a quiet, but affecting tone, 'I could have done it better, if I could have written at more leisure, and with a mind more at ease.' One morning a party was made to breakfast at Chiefswood; and any one who on that occasion looked at and heard Sir Walter Scott, in the midst

of his children, and grandchildren and friends, must have rejoiced to see that life still yielded him a store of pleasures, and that his heart was as open to their influence as ever.

"I was much struck by a few words which fell from him on this subject a short time afterwards. After mentioning an accident which had spoiled the promised pleasure of a visit to his daughter in London, he then added — 'I am like Seged, Lord of Ethiopia, in the Rambler, who said that he would have ten happy days, and all turned to disappointment. But, however, I have had as much happiness in my time as most men, and I must not complain now.' I said, that whatever had been his share of happiness, no man could have laboured better for it. He answered — 'I consider the capacity to labour as part of the happiness I have enjoyed.'

"Abbotsford was not much altered since 1824. I had then seen it complete, even to the statue of Maida at the door, though in 1824 old Maida was still alive, and now and then raised a majestic bark from behind the house. It was one of the little scenes of Abbotsford life which should have been preserved by a painter, when Sir Walter strolled out in a sunny morning to caress poor Maida, and condole with him upon being so 'very frail;' the aged hound dragging his gaunt limbs forward, painfully, yet with some remains of dignity, to meet the hand and catch the deep affectionate tones of his master.

"The greatest observable difference which the last three years had made in the outward appearance of Abbotsford, was in the advanced growth of the plantations. Sir Walter now showed me some rails and palisades, made of their wood, with more self-complacency than I ever saw him betray on any other subject. The garden did not appear to interest him so much, and the 'mavis and merle' were, upon principle, allowed to use their discretion as to the fruit. His favourite afternoon exercise was to ramble through his grounds, conversing with those who accompanied him, and trimming his young trees with a large knife. Never have I received an

invitation more gladly than when he has said - 'If you like a walk in the plantations. I will bestow my tediousness upon you after one o'clock.' His conversation at such times ran in that natural, easy, desultory course, which accords so well with the irregular movements of a walk over hill and woodland, and which he has himself described so well in his epistle to Mr. I remember with particular pleasure one of our walks through the romantic little ravine of the Huntly Burn. Our progress was leisurely, for the path was somewhat difficult to him. Occasionally he would stop, and, leaning on his walking-stick and fixing his eyes on those of the hearer, pour forth some sonorous stanza of an old poem applicable to the scene, or to the last subject of the conversation. Several times we paused to admire the good taste, as it seemed, with which his great Highland staghound Nimrod always displayed himself on those prominent points of the little glen, where his figure, in combination with the scenery, had the most picturesque effect. Sir Walter accounted for this by observing that the situations were of that kind which the dog's instinct would probably draw him to if looking out for game. In speaking of the Huntly Burn I used the word 'brook.' 'It is hardly that,' said he; - 'it is just a runnel.' Emerging into a more open country, we saw a road a little below us, on each side of which were some feathery saplings. 'I like,' he said, 'that way of giving an eyelash to the road.' Independently of the recollections called up by particular objects, his eye and mind always seemed to dwell with a perfect complacency on his own portion of the vale of Tweed: he used to say that he did not know a more 'liveable' country.

"A substitute for walking, which he always very cheerfully used, and which at last became his only resource for any distant excursion, was a ride in a four-wheeled open carriage, holding four persons, but not absolutely limited to that number on an emergency. Tame as this exercise might be in comparison with riding on horseback, or with walking under propitious circumstances, yet as he was rolled along to Melrose, or

^{*} See Marmion - Poetical Works, (Edin. Ed.) vol. vii. p. 182.



Bowhill, or Yair, his spirits always freshened; the air, the sounds, the familiar yet romantic scenes, wakened up all the poetry of his thoughts, and happy were they who heard it resolve itself into words. At the sight of certain objects -for example, in passing the green foundations of the little chapel of Lindean, where the body of the 'Dark Knight of Liddesdale' was deposited, on its way to Melrose,—it would, I suppose, have been impossible for him, unless with a companion hopelessly unsusceptible or preoccupied, to forbear some passing comment, some harping (if the word may be favourably used) on the tradition of the place. This was, perhaps, what he called 'bestowing his tediousness;' but if any one could think these effusions tedious because they often broke forth, such a man might have objected against the rushing of the Tweed, or the stirring of the trees in the wind, or any other natural melody, that he had heard the same thing before.

"Some days of my visit were marked by an almost perpetual confinement to the house; the rain being incessant. But the evenings were as bright and cheerful as the atmosphere of the days was dreary. Not that the gloomiest morning could ever be wearisome under a roof where, independently of the resources in society which the house afforded, the visiter might ransack a library, unique, I suppose, in some of its collections, and in all its departments interesting and characteristic of the founder. So many of the volumes were enriched with anecdotes or comments in his own hand, that to look over his books was in some degree conversing with him. And sometimes this occupation was pleasantly interrupted by a snatch of actual conversation with himself, when he entered from his own room, to consult or take away a book. How often have I heard with pleasure, after a long silence, the uneven step, the point of the stick striking against the floor, and then seen the poet himself emerge from his study, with a face of thought but yet of cheerfulness, followed perhaps by Nimrod, who stretched his limbs and yawned, as if tired out with some abstruse investigation.

"On one of the rainy days I have alluded to, when walking

at the usual hour became hopeless, Sir Walter asked me to sit with him while he continued his morning occupation, giving me, for my own employment, the publications of the Bannatyne Club. His study, as I recollect it, was strictly a workroom, though an elegant one. It has been fancifully decked out in pictures, but it had, I think, very few articles of mere The chief of these was the print of Stothard's Canterbury Pilgrims, which hung over the chimneypiece, and, from the place assigned to it, must have been in great favour, though Sir Walter made the characteristic criticism upon it, that, if the procession were to move, the young squire who is prancing in the foreground would in another minute be over his horse's head. The shelves were stored with serviceable books; one door opened into the great library, and a hangingstair within the room itself communicated with his bedroom. It would have been a good lesson to a desultory student, or even to a moderately active amanuensis, to see the unintermitted energy with which Sir Walter Scott applied himself to his work. I conjectured that he was at this time writing the Tales of a Grandfather. When we had sat down to our respective employments, the stillness of the room was unbroken. except by the light rattle of the rain against the windows, and the dashing trot of Sir Walter's pen over his paper; sounds not very unlike each other, and which seemed to vie together in rapidity and continuance. Sometimes, when he stopped to consult a book, a short dialogue would take place upon the subjects with which I was occupied - about Mary Queen of Scots, perhaps, or Viscount Dundee; or, again, the silence might be broken for a moment by some merry outcry in the hall, from one of the little grandchildren, which would half waken Nimrod, or Bran, or Spice, as they slept at Sir Walter's feet, and produce a growl or a stifled bark, not in anger, but by way of protest. For matters like these, work did not proceed the worse, nor, as it seemed to me, did Sir Walter feel at all discomposed by such interruptions as a message, or the entrance of a visiter. One door of his study opened into the hall, and there did not appear to be any understanding that

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he should not be disturbed. At the end of our morning we attempted a sortie, but had made only a little way in the shrubbery-walks overlooking the Tweed, when the rain drove us back. The river, swollen and discoloured, swept by majestically, and the sight drew from Sir Walter his favourite lines—

'I've seen Tweed's silver streams, glittering in the sunny beams, Turn drumly and dark, as they roll'd on their way.'

There could not have been a better moment for appreciating the imagery of the last line. I think it was in this short walk that he mentioned to me, with great satisfaction, the favourable prospects of his literary industry, and spoke sanguinely of retrieving his 'losses with the booksellers.'

"Those who have seen Abbotsford will remember that there is at the end of the hall, opposite to the entrance of the library, an arched door-way leading to other rooms. One night some of the party observed that, by an arrangement of light, easily to be imagined, a luminous space was formed upon the library door, in which the shadow of a person standing in the opposite archway made a very imposing appearance, the body of the hall remaining quite dark. Sir Walter had some time before told his friends of the deception of sight (mentioned in his Demonology) which made him for a moment imagine a figure of Lord Byron standing in the same hall.*

* "Not long after the death of a late illustrious poet, who had filled, while living, a great station in the eye of the public, a literary friend, to whom the deceased had been well known, was engaged, during the darkening twilight of an autumn evening, in perusing one of the publications which professed to detail the habits and opinions of the distinguished individual who was now no more. As the reader had enjoyed the intimacy of the deceased to a considerable degree, he was deeply interested in the publication, which contained some particulars relating to himself and other friends. A visiter was sitting in the apartment, who was also engaged in reading. Their sitting-room opened into an entrance-hall, rather fantastically fitted up with articles of armour, skins of wild animals, and the like. It was when laying down his book, and passing into this hall, through which the moon

The discoverers of the little phantasmagoria which I have just described, called to him to come and see their ghost. Whether he thought that raising ghosts at a man's door was not a comely amusement, or whether the parody upon a circumstance which had made some impression upon his own fancy was a little too strong, he certainly did not enter into the jest.

"On the subjects commonly designated as the 'marvellous,' his mind was susceptible, and it was delicate. He loved to handle them in his own manner and at his own season, not to be pressed with them, or brought to anything like a test of belief or disbelief respecting them. There is, perhaps, in most minds, a point more or less advanced, at which incredulity on these subjects may be found to waver. Sir Walter Scott, as it seemed to me, never cared to ascertain very precisely where this point lay in his own mental constitution; still less, I suppose, did he wish the investigation to be seriously pursued by others. In no instance, however, was his colloquial eloquence more striking than when he was well launched in some 'tale of wonder.' The story came from

was beginning to shine, that the individual of whom I speak, saw right before him, and in a standing posture, the exact representation of his departed friend, whose recollection had been so strongly brought to his imagination. He stopped for a single moment, so as to notice the wonderful accuracy with which fancy had impressed upon the bodily eye the peculiarities of dress and posture of the illustrious poet. Sensible, however, of the delusion, he felt no sentiment save that of wonder at the extraordinary accuracy of the resemblance, and stepped onwards towards the figure, which resolved itself, as he approached, into the various materials of which it was composed. These were merely a screen, occupied by great-coats, shawls, plaids, and such other articles as usually are found in a country entrance-hall. The spectator returned to the spot from which he had seen the illusion, and endeavoured, with all his power, to recall the image which had been so singularly vivid. But this was beyond his capacity; and the person who had witnessed the apparition, or, more properly, whose excited state had been the means of raising it, had only to return into the apartment, and tell his young friend under what a striking hallucination he had for a moment laboured." - Scorr's Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft, pp. 38-9.

him with an equally good grace, whether it was to receive a natural solution, to be smiled at as merely fantastical, or to take its chance of a serious reception."

About the close of August Sir Walter's Diary is chiefly occupied with an affair which, as the reader of the previous chapter is aware, did not come altogether unexpectedly on him. Among the documents laid before him in the Colonial Office, when he was in London at the close of 1826, were some which represented one of Buonaparte's attendants at St. Helena, General Gourgaud, as having been guilty of gross unfairness, giving the English Government private information that the Emperor's complaints of ill-usage were utterly unfounded, and yet then, and afterwards, aiding and assisting the delusion in France as to the harshness of Sir Hudson Lowe's conduct towards his captive. Sir Walter, when using these remarkable documents, guessed that Gourgaud might be inclined to fix a personal quarrel on himself; and there now appeared in the newspapers a succession of hints that the General was seriously bent on this purpose. He applied, as "Colonel Grogg" would have done forty years before, to " The Baronet."

DIARY—"August 27.—A singular letter from a lady, requesting me to father a novel of hers. That won't pass. Cadell transmits a notice from the French papers that Gourgaud has gone, or is going, to London; and the bibliopolist is in a great funk. I lack some part of his instinct. I have done Gourgaud no wrong. I have written to Will Clerk, who has mettle in him, and will think of my honour, as well as my safety."

" To William Clerk, Esq., Rose Court, Edinburgh.

"Abbotsford, 27th August 1827.

"My Dear Clerk, - I am about to claim an especial service from you in the name of our long and intimate friendship. I understand, from a passage in the French papers, that General Gourgaud has, or is about to set out for London, to verify the facts averred concerning him in my history of Napoleon. Now, in case of a personal appeal to me. I have to say that his confessions to Baron Sturmer, Count Balmain, and others at St. Helena, confirmed by him in various recorded conversations with Mr. Goulburn, then Under Secretary of State were documents of a historical nature which I found with others in the Colonial Office, and was therefore perfectly entitled to use. If his language has been misrepresented, he has certainly been very unfortunate; for it has been misrepresented by four or five different people to whom he said the same things, true or false he knows best. I also acted with delicacy towards him, leaving out whatever related to his private quarrels with Bertrand, &c., so that, in fact, he has no reason to complain of me, since it is ridiculous to suppose I was to suppress historical evidence, furnished by him voluntarily, because his present sentiments render it unpleasing for him that those which he formerly entertained should be known. Still, like a man who finds himself in a scrape, General Gourgaud may wish to fight himself out of it, and if the quarrel should be thrust on me - why, I will not baulk him, Jackie. He shall not dishonour the country through my sides, I can assure him. I have, of course, no wish to bring the thing to such an arbitrement. Now, in this case, I shall have occasion for a sensible and resolute friend, and I naturally look for him in the companion of my youth, on whose firmness and sagacity I can with such perfect confidence rely. If you can do me this office of friendship, will you have the kindness to let me know where or how we can form a speedy junction, should circumstances require it.

"After all, the matter may be a Parisian on dit. But it is best to be prepared. The passages are in the ninth volume of the book. Pray look at them. I have an official copy of the principal communication. Of the others I have abridged extracts. Should he desire to see them, I conceive I cannot refuse to give him copies, as it is likely they may not admit him to the Colonial Office. But if he asks any apology or explanation for having made use of his name, it is my purpose to decline it, and stand to consequences. I am aware I could march off upon the privileges of literature, and so forth, but I have no taste for that species of retreat; and if a gentleman says to me I have injured him, however captious the quarrel may be. I certainly do not think, as a man of honour, I can avoid giving him satisfaction, without doing intolerable injury to my own feelings, and giving rise to the most malignant animadversions. I need not say that I shall be anxious to hear from you, and that I always am, dear Clerk, affectionately WALTER SCOTT." vours.

DIARY—" September 4. — William Clerk quite ready and willing to stand my friend if Gourgaud should come my road. He agrees with me that there is no reason why he should turn on me, but that if he does, reason or none, it is best to stand buff to him. It appears to me that what is least forgiven in a man of any mark or likelihood, is want of that article black-guardly called pluck. All the fine qualities of genius cannot make amends for it. We are told the genius of poets, especially, is irreconcilable with this species of grenadier accomplishment. If so, quel chien de genre!

"September 10. — Gourgaud's wrath has burst forth in a very distant clap of thunder, in which he accuses me of contriving, with the Ministry, to slander his rag of a reputation. He be d——d for a fool, to make his case worse by stirring. I shall only revenge myself by publishing the whole extracts I made from the records of the Colonial Office, in which he will find enough to make him bite his nails.

"September 17. — Received from James Ballantyne the proofs of my Reply, with some cautious balaam from mine honest friend, alarmed by a Highland colonel, who had described Gourgaud as a mauvais garçon, famous fencer, marksman, and so forth. I wrote, in answer, which is true, that I hoped all my friends would trust to my acting with proper caution and advice; but that if I were capable, in a moment of weakness, of doing anything short of what my honour demanded, I should die the death of a poisoned rat in a hole, out of mere sense of my own degradation. God knows, that, though life is placid enough with me, I do not feel anything to attach me to it so strongly as to occasion my avoiding any risk which duty to my character may demand from me. — I set to work with the Tales of a Grandfather, second volume, and finished four pages."

" To the Editor of the Edinburgh Weekly Journal.

"Abbotsford, Sept. 14, 1827.

"Sir, — I observed in the London papers which I received yesterday, a letter from General Gourgaud, which I beg you will have the goodness to reprint, with this communication and the papers accompanying it.

"It appears, that the General is greatly displeased, because, availing myself of formal official documents, I have represented him, in my Life of Buonaparte, as communicating to the British Government and the representatives of others of the Allied Powers, certain statements in matter, which he seems at present desirous to deny or disavow, though in what degree, or to what extent, he has not explicitly stated.

"Upon these grounds, for I can discover no other, General Gourgaud has been pleased to charge me, in the most intemperate terms, as the agent of a plot, contrived by the late British Ministers, to slander and dishonour him. I will not attempt to imitate the General either in his eloquence or his vol. VIII.

invective, but confine myself to the simple fact, that his accusation against me is as void of truth as it is of plausibility. I undertook, and carried on, the task of writing the Life of Napoleon Buonaparte, without the least intercourse with, or encouragement from, the Ministry of the time, or any person connected with them; nor was it until my task was very far advanced, that I asked and obtained permission from the Earl Bathurst, then Secretary for the Colonial Department, to consult such documents as his office afforded, concerning the residence of Napoleon at St. Helena. His Lordship's liberality, with that of Mr. Hay, the Under Secretary, permitted me, in the month of October last, personal access to the official records, when I inspected more than sixteen quarto volumes of letters, from which I made memoranda or extracts at my own discretion, unactuated by any feeling excepting the wish to do justice to all parties.

"The papers relating to General Gourgaud and his communications were not pointed out to me by any one. They occurred, in the course of my researches, like other pieces of information, and were of too serious and important a character, verified as they were, to be omitted in the history. The idea that, dated and authenticated as they are, they could have been false documents, framed to mislead future historians, seems as absurd, as it is positively false that they were fabricated on any understanding with me, who had not at the time of their date the slightest knowledge of their existence.

"To me, evidence, ex facie the most unquestionable, bore, that General Gourgaud had attested certain facts of importance to different persons, at different times and places; and it did not, I own, occur to me that what he is stated to have made the subject of grave assertion and attestation, could or ought to be received as matter of doubt, because it rested only on a verbal communication made before responsible witnesses, and was not concluded by any formal signature of the party. I have been accustomed to consider a gentleman's word as equally worthy of credit with his handwriting.

" At the same time, in availing myself of these documents, I

felt it a duty to confine myself entirely to those particulars which concerned the history of Napoleon, his person and his situation at St. Helena; omitting all subordinate matters in which General Gourgaud, in his communications with our Ministers and others, referred to transactions of a more private character, personal to himself and other gentlemen residing at St. Helena. I shall observe the same degree of restraint as far as possible, out of the sincere respect I entertain for the honour and fidelity of General Gourgaud's companions in exile. who might justly complain of me for reviving the memory of petty altercations; but out of no deference to General Gourgaud, to whom I owe none. The line which General Gourgaud has adopted, obliges me now, in respect to my own character, to lay the full evidence before the public - subject only to the above restriction — that it may appear how far it bears out the account given of those transactions in my History of Napoleon. I should have been equally willing to have communicated my authorities to General Gourgaud in private, had he made such a request, according to the ordinary courtesies of society.

"I trust that, upon reference to the Life of Napoleon, I shall be found to have used the information these documents afforded, with becoming respect to private feelings, and, at the same time, with the courage and candour due to the truth of history. If I were capable of failing in either respect, I should despise myself as much, if possible, as I do the resentment of General Gourgaud. The historian's task of exculpation is of course ended, when he has published authorities of apparent authenticity. If General Gourgaud shall undertake to prove that the subjoined documents are false and forged, in whole or in part, the burden of the proof will lie with himself; and something better than the assertion of the party interested will be necessary to overcome the testimony of Mr. Goulburn and the other evidence.

"There is indeed another course. General Gourgaud may represent the whole of his communications as a trick played off upon the English Ministers, in order to induce them to grant his personal liberty. But I cannot imitate the General's disregard of common civility, so far as to suppose him capable of a total departure from veracity, when giving evidence upon his word of honour. In representing the Ex-Emperor's health as good, his finances as ample, his means of escape as easy and frequent, while he knew his condition to be the reverse in every particular, General Gourgaud must have been sensible, that the deceptive views thus impressed on the British Ministers must have had the natural effect of adding to the rigours of his patron's confinement. Napoleon, it must be recollected, would receive the visits of no English physician in whom Sir Hudson Lowe seemed to repose confidence, and he shunned, as much as possible, all intercourse with the British. therefore, were Sir Hudson Lowe and the British Ministers to believe concerning the real state of his health and circumstances, if they were to refuse credit to his own aide-de-camp. an officer of distinction, whom no one could suppose guilty of slandering his master for the purpose of obtaining a straight passage to England for himself, instead of being subjected to the inconvenience of going round by the Cape of Good Hope? And again, when General Gourgaud, having arrived in London, and the purpose of his supposed deception being fully attained, continued to represent Napoleon as feigning poverty whilst in affluence, affecting illness whilst in health, and possessing ready means of escape whilst he was complaining of unnecessary restraint - what effect could such statements produce on Lord Bathurst and the other members of the British Ministry, except a disregard to Napoleon's remonstrances, and a rigorous increase of every precaution necessary to prevent his escape? They had the evidence of one of his most intimate personal attendants to justify them for acting thus; and their own responsibility to Britain, and to Europe, for the safe custody of Napoleon, would have rendered them inexcusable had they acted otherwise.

"It is no concern of mine, however, how the actual truth of the fact stands. It is sufficient to me to have shown, that I have not laid to General Gourgaud's charge a single expression for which I had not the most indubitable authority. If I have been guilty of over-credulity in attaching more weight to General Gourgaud's evidence than it deserves, I am well taught not to repeat the error, and the world, too, may profit by the lesson. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

"WALTER SCOTT."

To this letter Gourgaud made a fiery rejoinder; but Scott declined to prolong the paper war, simply stating in Ballantyne's print, that "while leaving the question to the decision of the British public, he should have as little hesitation in referring it to the French nation, provided the documents he had produced were allowed to be printed in the French newspapers, from which hitherto they had been excluded." And he would indeed have been idle had he said more than this, for his cause had been taken up on the instant by every English journal, of whatever politics, and The Times thus summed up its very effective demolition of his antagonist:—

"Sir Walter Scott did that which would have occurred to every honest man, whose fair-dealing had violent imputations cast upon it. He produced his authorities, extracted from the Colonial Office. To these General Gourgaud's present pamphlet professes to be a reply; but we do conscientiously declare, that with every readiness to acknowledge - and, indeed, with every wish to discover - something like a defence of the character of General Gourgaud, whose good name has alone been implicated - (for that of Sir Walter was abundantly cleared, even had the official documents which he consulted turned out to be as false as they appear to be unquestionable), - the charge against the General stands precisely where it was before this ill-judged attempt at refutation was published; and in no one instance can we make out a satisfactory answer to the plain assertion, that Gourgaud had in repeated instances either betrayed Buonaparte, or sacrificed the truth. In the General's reply to Sir Walter Scott's statement, there is enough, even to satiety, of declamation against the English Government under Lord Castlereagh, of subterfuge and equivocation with regard to the words on record against himself, and of gross abuse and Billingsgate against the historian who has placarded him; but of direct and successful negative there is not one syllable. The Aide-de-camp of St. Helena shows himself to be nothing better than a cross between a blusterer and a sophist."

Sir Walter's family were, of course, relieved from considerable anxiety, when the newspapers ceased to give paragraphs about General Gourgaud; and the blowing over of this alarm was particularly acceptable to his eldest daughter, who had to turn southwards about the beginning of October. He himself certainly cared little or nothing about that (or any similar) affair; and if it had any affect at all upon his spirits, they were pleasurably excited and stimulated. He possessed a pair of pistols taken from Napoleon's carriage at Waterloo, and presented to him, I believe, by the late Honourable Colonel James Stanhope, and he said he designed to make use of them, in case the controversy should end in a recounter, and his friend Clerk should think as well as he did of their fabric. But this was probably a jest. I may observe that I once saw Sir Walter shoot at a mark with pistols, and he acquitted himself well; so much so as to excite great admiration in some young officers whom he had found practising in his barn on a rainy day. With the rifle, he is said by those who knew him in early life, to have been a very good shot indeed.

Before Gourgaud fell quite asleep, Sir Walter made an excursion to Edinburgh to meet his friends, Mrs. Maclean Clephane and Lady Northampton, with whom he had

some business to transact; and they, feeling, as all his intimate friends at this time did, that the kindliest thing they could do by him was to keep him as long as possible away from his desk, contrived to seduce him into escorting them as far as Greenock on their way to the Hebrides. He visited on his return his esteemed kinsman. Mr. Campbell of Blythswood,* in whose park he saw, with much interest, the Argyle Stone, marking the spot where the celebrated Earl was taken prisoner in 1685. He notes in his Diary, that "the Highland drovers are still apt to break Blythswood's fences to see this Stone;" and then records the capital turtle, &c. of his friend's entertainment, and some good stories told at table, especially this: - " Prayer of the minister of the Cumbrays, two miserable islands in the mouth of the Clyde: O Lord, bless and be gracious to the Greater and the Lesser Cumbrays, and in thy mercy do not forget the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland.' This is nos poma natamus with a vengeance."

Another halt was at the noble seat of his early friend Cranstoun, by the Falls of the Clyde. He says —

"Cranstoun and I walked before dinner. I never saw the Great Fall of Corra Linn from this side before, and I think it the best point perhaps; at all events, it is not that from which it is usually seen; so Lord Corehouse has the sight, and escapes the locusts. This is a superb place. Cranstoun has as much feeling about improvement as other things. Like all new improvers, he is at more expense than is necessary, plants too thick, and trenches where trenching is superfluous. But this is the eagerness of a young artist. Besides the grand

Archibald Campbell, Esq., Lord-Lieutenant of Renfrewshire, and often M.P. for Glasgow. This excellent man, whose memory will long be honoured in the district which his munificent benevolence adorned, died in London, September 1838, aged 75.



lion, the Fall of Clyde, he has more than one lion's whelp—a fall of a brook in a cleugh called Mill's Gill must be superb in rainy weather. The old Castle of Corehouse, too, is much more castle-like on this than from the other side. My old friend was very happy when I told him the favourable prospect of my affairs. To be sure, if I come through, it will be wonder to all, and most to myself."

On returning from this trip, Scott found an invitation from Lord and Lady Ravensworth to meet the Duke of Wellington at their castle near Durham. The Duke was then making a progress in the north of England, to which additional importance was given by the uncertain state of political arrangements; - the chance of Lord Goderich's being able to maintain himself as Canning's successor seeming very precarious - and the opinion that his Grace must soon be called to a higher station than that of Commander of the Forces, which he had accepted under the new Premier, gaining ground every Sir Walter, who felt for the Great Captain the pure and exalted devotion that might have been expected from some honoured soldier of his banners, accepted this invitation, and witnessed a scene of enthusiasm with which its principal object could hardly have been more gratified than he was.

DIARY—" October 1.— I set about work for two hours, and finished three pages; then walked for two hours; then home, adjusted Sheriff processes, and cleared the table. I am to set off to-morrow for Ravensworth Castle, to meet the Duke of Wellington; a great let-off, I suppose. Yet I would almost rather stay, and see two days more of Lockhart and my daughter, who will be off before my return. Perhaps——But there is no end to perhaps. We must cut the rope, and let the vessel drive down the tide of destiny.

"October 2. - Set out in the morning at seven, and reached Kelso by a little past ten with my own horses. took the Wellington coach to carry me to Wellington - smart that. Nobody inside but an old lady, who proved a toywoman in Edinburgh; her head furnished with as substantial ware as her shop, but a good soul, I'se warrant her. Heard all her debates with her landlord about a new door to the cellar - and the propriety of paying rent on the 15th or 25th of May. Landlords and tenants will have different opinions on that subject. We dined at Wooler, where an obstreperous horse retarded us for an hour at least, to the great alarm of my friend the toy-woman. - N. B. She would have made a good feather-bed if the carriage had happened to fall, and her undermost. The heavy roads had retarded us near an hour more, so that I hesitated to go to Ravensworth so late; but my goodwoman's tales of dirty sheets, and certain recollections of a Newcastle inn, induced me to go on. When I arrived, the family had just retired. Lord Ravensworth and Mr. Liddell came down, however, and both received me as kindly as possible.

"October 3. - Rose about eight or later. My morals begin to be corrupted by travel and fine company. Went to Durham with Lord Ravensworth betwixt one and two. Found the gentlemen of Durham county and town assembled to receive the Duke of Wellington. I saw several old friends, and with difficulty suited names to faces, and faces to names. There were Dr. Philpotts, Dr. Gilly, and his wife, and a world of acquaintance, - among others, Sir Thomas Lawrence; whom I asked to come on to Abbotsford, but he could not. He is, from habit of coaxing his subjects I suppose, a little too fair-spoken, otherwise very pleasant. The Duke arrived very late. There were bells, and cannon, and drums, trumpets, and banners, besides a fine troop of yeomanry. The address was well expressed, and as well answered by the Duke. The enthusiasm of the ladies and the gentry was great - the common people more lukewarm. The Duke has lost popularity in accepting political power. He will be more useful to his country, it may be, than ever, but will scarce be so gracious in the people's eyes — and he will not care a curse for what outward show he has lost. But I must not talk of curses, for we are going to take our dinner with the Bishop of Durham. — We dined about one hundred and forty or fifty men,— a distinguished company for rank and property; — Marshal Beresford, and Sir John,* amongst others — Marquis of Lothian, Lord Feversham, Marquis Londonderry — and I know not who besides —

'Lords and Dukes and noble Princes, All the pride and flower of Spain.'

We dined in the old baronial hall, impressive from its rude antiquity, and fortunately free from the plaster of former improvement, as I trust it will long be from the gingerbread taste of modern Gothicizers. The bright moon streaming in through the old Gothic windows contrasted strangely with the artificial lights within; spears, banners, and armour were intermixed with the pictures of old bishops, and the whole had a singular mixture of baronial pomp with the grave and more chastened dignity of prelacy. The conduct of our reverend entertainer suited the character remarkably well. Amid the welcome of a Count Palatine he did not for an instant forget the gravity of the Church dignitary. All his toasts were gracefully given, and his little speeches well made, and the more affecting that the failing voice sometimes reminded us that our host laboured under the infirmities of advanced life. To me personally the Bishop was very civil."

In writing to me next day, Sir Walter says—"The dinner was one of the finest things I ever saw; it was in the old Castle Hall, untouched, for aught I know, since Anthony Beck feasted Edward Longshanks on his way

* Admiral Sir John Beresford had some few years before this commanded on the Leith station — when Sir Walter and he saw a great deal of each other — " and merry men were they."

to invade Scotland.* The moon streamed through the high latticed windows as if she had been curious to see what was going on." I was also favoured with a letter on the subject from Dr. Philpotts (now Bishop of Exeter), who said - "I wish you had witnessed this very striking scene. I never saw curiosity and enthusiasm so highly excited, and I may add, as to a great part of the company, so nearly balanced. Sometimes I doubted whether the hero or the poet was fixing most attention - the latter, I need hardly tell you, appeared unconscious that he was regarded differently from the others about him, until the good Bishop rose and proposed his health." Another friend, the Honourable Henry Liddell, enables me to give the words ("ipsissima verba") of Sir Walter in acknowledging this toast. He says - "The manner in which Bishop Van Mildert proceeded on this occasion will never be forgotten by those who know how to appreciate scholarship without pedantry, and dignity without ostentation. Sir Walter had been observed throughout the day with extraordinary interest - I should rather say enthusiasm. Bishop gave his health with peculiar felicity, remarking that he could reflect upon the labours of a long literary life, with the consciousness that everything he had written tended to the practice of virtue, and to the improvement of the human race. Sir Walter replied, 'that upon no occasion of his life had he ever returned thanks for the honour done him in drinking his health, with a stronger sense of obligation to the proposer of it than on the present — that hereafter he should always reflect

^{*} The warlike Bishop Beck accompanied Edward I. in his Scotch expedition, and if we may believe Blind Harry, very narrowly missed having the honour to die by the hand of Wallace in a skirmish on the street of Glasgow.



with great pride upon that moment of his existence, when his health had been given in such terms, by the Bishop of Durham in his own baronial hall, surrounded and supported by the assembled aristocracy of the two northern counties, and in the presence of the Duke of Wellington."

The Diary continues -

"Mrs. Van Mildert held a sort of drawing-room after we rose from table, at which a great many ladies attended. After this we went to the Assembly-rooms, which were crowded with company. Here I saw some very pretty girls dancing merrily that old-fashioned thing called a country-dance, which Old England has now thrown aside,—as she would do her creed, if there were some foreign frippery offered instead. We got away after midnight, a large party, and reached Ravensworth Castle—Duke of Wellington, Lord Londonderry, and about twenty besides—about halfpast one. Soda water, and to bed by two.

"October 4. - Slept till nigh ten - fatigued by our toils of vesterday, and the unwonted late hours. Still too early for this Castle of Indolence, for I found few of last night's party yet appearing. I had an opportunity of some talk with the Duke. He does not consider Fov's book as written by himself, but as a thing got up perhaps from notes. Mentioned that Foy, when in Spain, was, like other French officers, very desirous of seeing the English papers, through which alone they could collect any idea of what was going on without their own cantonments, for Napoleon permitted no communication of that kind with France. The Duke growing tired of this, at length told Baron Tripp, whose services he chiefly used in communications with the outposts, that he was not to give them the newspapers. 'What reason shall I allege for withholding them?' said Tripp. 'None,' replied the Duke -'Let them allege some reason why they want them.' Foy was



not at a loss to assign a reason. He said he had considerable sums of money in the English funds, and wanted to see how stocks fell and rose. The excuse, however, did not go down. — I remember Baron Tripp, a Dutch nobleman, and a dandy of the first water, and yet with an energy in his dandyism which made it respectable. He drove a gig as far as Dunrobin Castle, and back again, without a whip. He looked after his own horse, for he had no servant, and after all his little establishment of clothes and necessaries, with all the accuracy of a petit maître. He was one of the best-dressed men possible, and his horse was in equally fine condition as if he had had a dozen of grooms. I met him at Lord Somerville's, and liked him much. But there was something exaggerated, as appeared from the conclusion of his life. Baron Tripp shot himself in Italy for no assignable cause.

"What is called great society, of which I have seen a good deal in my day, is now amusing to me, because from age and indifference I have lost the habit of considering myself as a part of it, and have only the feelings of looking on as a spectator of the scene, who can neither play his part well nor ill, instead of being one of the dramatis personæ; so, careless what is thought of myself, I have full time to attend to the motions of others.

"Our party went to-day to Sunderland, when the Duke was brilliantly received by an immense population, chiefly of seamen. The difficulty of getting into the rooms was dreadful—an ebbing and flowing of the crowd, which nearly took me off my legs. The entertainment was handsome; about two hundred dined, and appeared most hearty in the cause which had convened them—some indeed so much so, that, finding themselves so far on the way to perfect happiness, they e'en would go on. After the dinner-party broke up, there was a ball, numerously attended, where there was a prodigious anxiety discovered for shaking of hands. The Duke had enough of it, and I came in for my share; for, though as jackall to the lion, I got some part in whatever was going. We got home about half-past two in the morning, sufficiently tired."

Some months afterwards, Sir Cuthbert Sharp, who had been particularly kind and attentive to Scott when at Sunderland, happened, in writing to him on some matter of business, to say he hoped he had not forgotten his friends in that quarter. Sir Walter's answer to Sir Cuthbert (who had been introduced to him by his old and dear friend Mr. Surtees of Mainsforth) begins thus:—

- "Forget thee? No! my worthy fere!
 Forget blithe mirth and gallant cheer?
 Death sooner stretch me on my bier!
 Forget thee? No.
- "Forget the universal shout
 When 'canny Sunderland' spoke out? —
 A truth which knaves affect to doubt —
 Forget thee? No.
- "Forget you! No though now-a-day
 I've heard your knowing people say,
 Disown the debt you cannot pay,
 You'll find it far the thriftiest way —
 But I! O no.
- "Forget your kindness found for all room,
 In what, though large, seem'd still a small room,
 Forget my Surtees in a ball room? —
 Forget you? No.
- "Forget your sprightly dumpty-diddles,
 And beauty tripping to the fiddles?
 Forget my levely friends the Liddells?—
 Forget you? No.
- "So much for oblivion, my dear Sir C.; and now, having dismounted from my Pegasus, who is rather spavined, I charge a-foot, like an old dragoon as I am," &c. &c.

[&]quot;DIARY — October 5. — A quiet day at Ravensworth Castle, giggling and making giggle among the kind and frank-

hearted young people. The Castle is modern, excepting always two towers of great antiquity. Lord R. manages his woods admirably well. In the evening plenty of fine music, with heart as well as voice and instrument. Much of this was the spontaneous effusions of Mrs. Arkwright (a daughter of Stephen Kemble), who has set Hohenlinden, and other pieces of poetry, to music of a highly-gifted character. The Miss Liddells and Mrs. Barrington sang 'The Campbells are coming,' in a tone that might have waked the dead.

" October 6. — Left Ravensworth this morning, and travelled as far as Whittingham with Marquis of Lothian. Arrived at Alnwick to dinner, where I was very kindly received. Duke of Northumberland is a handsome man, who will be corpulent if he does not continue to take hard exercise. Duchess very pretty and lively, but her liveliness is of that kind which shows at once it is connected with thorough principle, and is not liable to be influenced by fashionable caprice. The habits of the family are early and regular; I conceive they may be termed formal and old-fashioned by such visiters as claim to be the pink of the mode. The Castle is a fine old pile, with various courts and towers, and the entrance is magnificent. It wants, however, the splendid feature of a The inside fitting up is an attempt at Gothic, but the taste is meagre and poor, and done over with too much gilding. It was done half a century ago, when this kind of taste was ill understood. I found here the Bishop of Gloucester, * &c. &c.

"October 7.— This morning went to church, and heard an excellent sermon from the Bishop of Gloucester; he has great dignity of manner, and his accent and delivery are forcible. Drove out with the Duke in a phaeton, and saw part of the park, which is a fine one lying along the Alne. But it has

* Dr. Bethell, who had been tutor to the Duke of Northumberland, held at this time the See of Gloucester. He was thence translated to Exeter, and latterly to Bangor.—[1839.]



been ill planted. It was laid out by the celebrated Brown. who substituted clumps of birch and Scottish firs for the beautiful oaks and copse which grow nowhere so freely as in Northumberland. To complete this, the late Duke did not thin, so the wood is in a poor state. All that the Duke cuts down is so much waste, for the people will not buy it where coals are so cheap. Had they been oak-coppice, the bark would have fetched its value; had they been grown oaks, the sea-ports would have found a market; had they been larch, the country demands for ruder purposes would have been unauswerable. The Duke does the best he can to retrieve his woods, but seems to despond more than a young man ought to do. It is refreshing to see such a man in his situation give so much of his time and thoughts to the improvement of his estates, and the welfare of the people. He tells me his people in Keeldar were all quite wild the first time his father went up to shoot there. The women had no other dress than a bed-gown and petticoat. The men were savage, and could hardly be brought to rise from the heath, either from sullenness or fear. They sang a wild tune, the burden of which was orsina, orsina, orsina. The females sang, the men danced round, and at a certain point of the tune they drew their dirks, which they always wore.

"We came by the remains of an old Carmelite Monastery, which form a very fine object in the park. It was finished by De Vesci. The gateway of Alnwick Abbey, also a fine specimen, is standing about a mile distant. The trees are much finer on the left side of the Alne, where they have been let alone by the capability villain. Visited the enceinte of the Castle, and passed into the dungeon. There is also an armoury, but damp, and the arms in indifferent order. One odd petard-looking thing struck me. — Mem. to consult Grose. I had the honour to sit in Hotspur's seat, and to see the Bloody Gap, a place where the external wall must have been breached. The Duchess gave me a book of etchings of the antiquities of Alnwick and Warkworth from her own drawings. I had half a mind to stay to see Warkworth, but Anne

is alone. We had prayers in the evening read by the Archdeacon."*

On the 8th Sir Walter reached Abbotsford, and forthwith resumed his Grandfather's Tales, which he composed throughout with the ease and heartiness reflected in this entry:—

"This morning was damp, dripping, and unpleasant; so I even made a work of necessity, and set to the Tales like a dragon. I murdered Maclellan of Bomby at the Thrieve Castle; stabbed the Black Douglas in the town of Stirling; astonished King James before Roxburgh; and stifled the Earl of Mar in his bath, in the Canongate. A wild world, my masters, this Scotland of ours must have been. No fear of want of interest; no lassitude in those days for want of work—

'For treason, d'ye see,
Was to them a dish of tea,
And murder bread and butter.' *

Such was his life in autumn 1827. Before I leave the period, I must note how greatly I admired the manner in which all his dependents appeared to have met the reverse of his fortunes—a reverse which inferred very considerable alteration in the circumstances of every one of them. The butler, instead of being the easy chief of a large establishment, was now doing half the work of the house, at probably half his former wages. Old Peter, who had been for five-and-twenty years a dignified coachman, was now ploughman in ordinary, only putting his horses to the carriage upon high and rare occasions; and so on with all the rest that remained of the ancient train. And all, to my view, seemed happier

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^{*} Mr. Archdeacon Singleton.

that they had ever done before. Their good conduct had given every one of them a new elevation in his own mind - and vet their demeanour had gained, in place of losing, in simple humility of observance. The great loss was that of William Laidlaw, for whom (the estate being all but a fragment in the hands of the trustees and their agent) there was now no occupation here. The cottage, which his taste had converted into a loveable retreat, had found a rent-paying tenant; and he was living a dozen miles off on the farm of a relation in the Vale of Yarrow. Every week, however, he came down to have a ramble with Sir Walter over their old haunts - to hear how the pecuniary atmosphere was darkening or brightening; and to read in every face at Abbotsford, that it could never be itself again until circumstances should permit his reestablishment at Kaeside.

All this warm and respectful solicitude must have had a preciously soothing influence on the mind of Scott, who may be said to have lived upon love. No man cared less about popular admiration and applause; but for the least chill on the affection of any near and dear to him he had the sensitiveness of a maiden. I cannot forget, in particular, how his eyes sparkled when he first pointed out to me Peter Mathieson guiding the plough on the haugh: "Egad," said he, "auld Pepe" (this was the children's name for their good friend) - " auld Pepe's whistling at his darg. The honest fellow said, a yoking in a deep field would do baith him and the blackies good. If things get round with me, easy shall be Pepe's cushion." In general, during that autumn, I thought Sir Walter enjoyed much his usual spirits; and often, no doubt, he did so. His Diary shows (what perhaps many of his intimates doubted during his lifetime) that, in spite

of the dignified equanimity which characterised all his conversation with mankind, he had his full share of the delicate sensibilities, the mysterious ups and downs, the wayward melancholy, and fantastic sunbeams of the poetical temperament. It is only with imaginative minds, in truth, that sorrows of the spirit are enduring. Those he had encountered were veiled from the eye of the world, but they lasted with his life. What a picture have we in his entry about the Runic letters he had carved in the day of young passion on the turf among the grave-stones of St. Andrews! And again, he wrote neither sonnets, nor elegies, nor monodies, nor even an epitaph on his wife; — but what an epitaph is his Diary throughout the year 1826 — ay, and down to the close!

There is one entry of that Diary for the period we are leaving, which paints the man in his tenderness, his fortitude, and his happy wisdom:—

"September 24. — Worked in the morning as usual, and sent off the proofs and copy. Something of the black dog still hanging about me; but I will shake him off. I generally affect good spirits in company of my family, whether 1 am enjoying them or not. It is too severe to sadden the harmless mirth of others by suffering your own causeless melancholy to be seen; and this species of exertion is, like virtue, its own reward; for the good spirits, which are at first simulated, become at length real."

The first series of Chronicles of the Canongate — (which title supplanted that of "The Canongate Miscellany, or Traditions of the Sanctuary") — was published early in the winter. The contents were, the Highland Widow, the Two Drovers, and the Surgeon's Daughter — all in their styles excellent, except that the Indian part of the last does not well harmonize with the rest;

and certain preliminary chapters which were generally considered as still better than the stories they introduce. The portraiture of Mrs. Murray Keith, under the name of Mrs. Bethune Baliol, and that of Chrystal Croftangry throughout, appear to me unsurpassed in Scott's writings. In the former, I am assured he has mixed up various features of his own beloved mother; and in the latter, there can be no doubt that a good deal was taken from nobody but himself. In fact, the choice of the hero's residence, the original title of the book, and a world of minor circumstances, were suggested by the actual condition and prospects of the author's affairs; for it appears from his Diary, though I have not thought it necessary to quote those entries, that from time to time, between December 1826 and November 1827, he had renewed threatenings of severe treatment from Messrs. Abud and Co.: and, on at least one occasion, he made every preparation for taking shelter in the Sanctuary of Holyroodhouse. Although these people were well aware that at Christmas 1827 a very large dividend would be paid on the Ballantyne estate, they would not understand that their interest, and that of all the creditors, lay in allowing Scott the free use of his time; that by thwarting and harassing him personally, nothing was likely to be achieved but the throwing up of the trust, and the settlement of the insolvent house's affairs on the usual terms of a sequestration; in which case there could be no doubt that he would, on resigning all his assets, be discharged absolutely, with liberty to devote his future exertions to his own sole benefit. The Abuds would understand nothing, but that the very unanimity of the other creditors as to the propriety of being gentle with him, rendered it extremely probable that their harshness might be rewarded by immediate payment of their whole demand. They fancied that the trustees would clear off any one debt, rather than disturb the arrangements generally adopted; they fancied that, in case they laid Sir Walter Scott in prison, there would be some extraordinary burst of feeling in Edinburgh — that private friends would interfere — in short, that in one way or another, they should get hold, without further delay, of their "pound of flesh." — Two or three paragraphs from the Diary will be enough as to this unpleasant subject.

" October 31. - 'Just as I was merrily cutting away among my trees, arrives Mr. Gibson with a very melancholy look, and indeed the news he brought was shocking enough. seems Mr. Abud, the same who formerly was disposed to disturb me in London, has given positive orders to take out diligence against me for his debt. This breaks all the measures we had resolved on, and prevents the dividend from taking place, by which many poor persons will be great sufferers. For me the alternative will be more painful to my feelings than prejudicial to my interests. To submit to a sequestration, and allow the creditors to take what they can get, will be the inevitable consequence. This will cut short my labour by several years, which I might spend, and spend in vain, in endeavouring to meet their demands. We shall know more on Saturday, and not sooner. - I went to Bowhill with Sir Adam Fergusson to dinner, and maintained as good a countenance in the midst of my perplexities as a man need desire. It is not bravado; I feel firm and resolute.

"November 1. — I waked in the night and lay two hours in feverish meditation. This is a tribute to natural feeling. But the air of a fine frosty morning gave me some elasticity of spirit. It is strange that about a week ago I was more dispirited for nothing at all, than I am now for perplexities which set at defiance my conjectures concerning their issue. I sup-



pose that I, the Chronicler of the Canongate, will have to take up my residence in the Sanctuary, unless I prefer the more airy residence of the Calton Jail, or a trip to the Isle of Man. It is to no purpose being angry with Abud or Ahab, or whatever name he delights in. He is seeking his own, and thinks by these harsh measures to render his road to it more speedy. — Sir Adam Fergusson left Bowhill this morning for Dumfries-shire. I returned to Abbotsford to Anne, and told her this unpleasant news. She stood it remarkably well, poor body.

"November 2.— I was a little bilious this night — no wonder. Had sundry letters without any power of giving my mind to answer them — one about Gourgaud with his nonsense. I shall not trouble my head more on that score. Well, it is a hard knock on the elbow: I knew I had a life of labour before me, but I was resolved to work steadily: now they have treated me like a recusant turnspit, and put in a red-hot cinder into the wheel alongst with me. But of what use is philosophy — and I have always pretended to a little of a practical character — if it cannot teach us to do or suffer? The day is glorious, yet I have little will to enjoy it; yet, were a twelvemonth over, I should perhaps smile at what makes me now very serious. Smile! No—that can never be. My present feelings cannot be recollected with cheerfulness; but I may drop a tear of gratitude.

"November 3. — Slept ill, and lay one hour longer than usual in the morning. I gained an hour's quiet by it,— that is much. I feel a little shaken at the result of to-day's post. I am not able to go out. My poor workers wonder that I pass them without a word. I can imagine no alternative but the Sanctuary or the Isle of Man. Both shocking enough. But in Edinburgh I am always on the scene of action, free from uncertainty, and near my poor daughter; so I think I shall prefer it, and thus I rest in unrest. But I will not let this unman me. Our hope, heavenly and earthly, is poorly

anchored, if the cable parts upon the stream. I believe in God, who can change evil into good; and I am confident that what befalls us is always ultimately for the best.

"November 4. — Put my papers in some order, and prepared for the journey. It is in the style of the Emperors of Abyssinia, who proclaim, 'Cut down the Kantuffa in the four quarters of the world, for I know not where I am going.' Yet, were it not for poor Anne's doleful looks, I would feel firm as a piece of granite. Even the poor dogs seem to fawn on me with anxious meaning, as if there were something going on they could not comprehend. They probably notice the packing of the clothes, and other symptoms of a journey.

"Set off at twelve, firmly resolved in body and mind. Dined at Fushie Bridge. Ah! good Mrs. Wilson, you know not you are like to lose an old customer!*

"But when I arrived in Edinburgh at my faithful friend Mr. Gibson's — lo! the scene had again changed, and a new hare is started," &c. &c.

The "new hare" was this. It transpired in the very nick of time, that a suspicion of usury attached to these Israelites without guile, in a transaction with Hurst and Robinson, as to one or more of the bills for which the house of Ballantyne had become responsible. This suspicion, upon investigation, assumed a shape sufficiently tangible to justify Ballantyne's trustees in carrying the point before the Court of Session; but they failed to establish their allegation.† The amount was then settled



^{*} Mrs. Wilson, landlady of the inn at Fushie, one stage from Edinburgh — an old dame of some humour, with whom Sir Walter always had a friendly colloquy in passing. I believe the charm was, that she had passed her childhood among the Gipsies of the Border. But her flery Radicalism latterly was another source of high merriment.

[†] The Editor entirely disclaims giving any opinion of his own respecting these transactions with Messrs. Abud & Co. He considers it

- but how and in what manner was long unknown to Scott. Sir William Forbes, whose banking-house was one of Messrs. Ballantyne's chief creditors, crowned his generous efforts for Scott's relief by privately paying the whole of Abud's demand (nearly £2000) out of his own pocket - ranking as an ordinary creditor for the amount; and taking care at the same time that his old friend should be allowed to believe that the affair had merged quietly in the general measures of the trustees. it was not until some time after Sir William's death, that Sir Walter learned what he had done on this occasion; and I may as well add here, that he himself died in utter ignorance of some services of a like sort, which he owed to the secret liberality of three of his brethren at the Clerk's table - Hector Macdonald Buchanan, Colin Mackenzie, and Sir Robert Dundas.

I ought not to omit, that as soon as Sir Walter's eldest son heard of the Abud business, he left Ireland for Edinburgh; but before he reached his father, the alarm had blown over.

This vision of the real Canongate has drawn me away from the Chronicles of Mr. Croftangry. The scenery of his patrimonial inheritance was sketched from that of Carmichael, the ancient and now deserted mansion of the noble family of Hyndford; but for his strongly Scottish feelings about parting with his land, and stern efforts to suppress them, the author had not to go so far a-field. Christie Steele's brief character of Croftangry's ancestry, too, appears to suit well all that we have on record concerning his own more immediate progenitors of the stub-

as his business to represent the views which Sir Walter took of the affair from time to time: whether these were or were not uniformly correct, he has no means to decide—and indeed no curiosity to inquire.

born race of Raeburn: -- "They werena ill to the poor folk, sir, and that is ave something; they were just decent bien bodies. Onv poor creature that had face to beg got an awmous, and welcome; they that were shamefaced gaed by, and twice as welcome. But they keepit an honest walk before God and man, the Croftangry's, and as I said before, if they did little good, they did as little ill. They lifted their rents and spent them; called in their kain and eat them; gaed to the kirk of a Sunday: bowed civilly if folk took aff their bannets as they gaed by, and lookit as black as sin at them that keepit them on." I hope I shall give no offence by adding, that many things in the character and manners of Mr. Gideon Gray of Middlemas, in the Tale of the Surgeon's Daughter, were considered at the time by Sir Walter's neighbours on Tweedside as copied from Dr. Ebenezer Clarkson of Selkirk. "He was," says the Chronicler, "of such reputation in the medical world, that he had been often advised to exchange the village and its meagre circle of practice for Edinburgh. There is no creature in Scotland that works harder, and is more poorly requited, than the country doctor, unless perhaps it may be his horse. Yet the horse is, and indeed must be, hardy, active, and indefatigable, in spite of a rough coat and indifferent condition; and so you will often find in his master, under a blunt exterior, professional skill and enthusiasm, intelligence, humanity, courage, and science." A true picture - a portrait from the life, of Scott's hard-riding, benevolent, and sagacious old friend, "to all the country dear."

These Chronicles were not received with exceeding favour at the time; and Sir Walter was a good deal discouraged. Indeed he seems to have been with some

difficulty persuaded by Cadell and Ballantyne, that it would not do for him to "lie fallow" as a novelist; and then, when he in compliance with their entreaties began a Second Canongate Series, they were both disappointed with his MS., and told him their opinions so plainly, that his good-nature was sharply tried. The Tales which they disapproved of, were those of My Aunt Margaret's Mirror, and The Laird's Jock; he consented to lay them aside, and began St. Valentine's Eve. or the Fair Maid of Perth, which from the first pleased his critics. It was in the brief interval occasioned by these misgivings and debates, that his ever elastic mind threw off another charming paper for the Quarterly Review - that on Ornamental Gardening, by way of sequel to the Essay on Planting Waste Lands. Another fruit of his leisure was a sketch of the life of George Bannatyne, the collector of ancient Scottish poetry, for the Club which bears his name.

DIARY—"Edinburgh, November 6.— Wrought upon an introduction to the notices which have been recovered of George Bannatyne, author or rather transcriber of the famous Repository of Scottish Poetry, generally known by the name of the Bannatyne MS. They are very jejune these same notices—a mere record of matters of business, putting forth and calling in sums of money, and such like. Yet it is a satisfaction to know that this great benefactor to the literature of Scotland had a prosperous life, and enjoyed the pleasures of domestic society, and, in a time peculiarly perilous, lived unmolested and died in quiet."

He had taken, for that winter, the house No. 6 Shandwick Place, which he occupied by the month during the remainder of his servitude as a Clerk of Session. Very

near this house, he was told a few days after he took possession, dwelt the aged mother of his first love — the lady of the Runic characters; and he expressed to his friend Mrs. Skene a wish that she should carry him to renew an acquaintance which seems to have been interrupted from the period of his youthful romance. Mrs. Skene complied with his desire, and she tells me that a very painful scene ensued, adding — "I think it highly probable that it was on returning from this call that he committed to writing the verses To Time, by his early favourite, which you have printed in your first volume."* I believe Mrs. Skene will have no doubt on that matter when the following entries from his Diary meet her eye:—

"November 7.— Began to settle myself this morning, after the hurry of mind and even of body which I have lately undergone.—I went to make a visit, and fairly softened myself, like an old fool, with recalling old stories, till I was fit for nothing but shedding tears and repeating verses for the whole night. This is sad work. The very grave gives up its dead, and time rolls back thirty years to add to my perplexities. I don't care. I begin to grow case-hardened, and, like a stag turning at bay, my naturally good temper grows fierce and dangerous. Yet what a romance to tell!— and told, I fear, it will one day be. And then my three years of dreaming, and my two years of wakening, will be chronicled, doubtless. But the dead will feel no pain.

"November 10. — Wrote out my task and little more. At twelve o'clock I went again to poor Lady —— to talk over old stories. I am not clear that it is a right or healthful indulgence to be ripping up old sores, but it seems to give her deep-rooted sorrow words, and that is a mental bloodletting.



^{*} See ante, Vol. I. p. 277.

To me these things are now matter of calm and solemn recollection, never to be forgotten, yet scarce to be remembered with pain. — We go out to Saint Catherine's to-day. I am glad of it, for I would not have these recollections haunt me, and society will put them out of my head."

Sir Walter has this entry on reading the Gazette of the battle of Navarino: —

"November 14. — We have thumped the Turks very well. But as to the justice of our interference, I will only suppose some Turkish plenipotentiary, with an immense turban and long loose trousers, comes to dictate to us the mode in which we should deal with our refractory liegemen, the Catholics of Ireland. We hesitate to admit his interference, on which the Moslem runs into Cork Bay, or Bantry Bay, alongside of a British squadron, and sends a boat to tow on a fire-ship. A vessel fires on the boat and sinks it. Is there an aggression on the part of those who fired first, or of those whose manœuvres occasioned the firing?"

A few days afterwards he received a very agreeable piece of intelligence. The King had not forgotten his promise with respect to the poet's second son; and Lord Dudley, then Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, was a much attached friend from early days— (he had been partly educated at Edinburgh under the roof of Dugald Stewart)— his Lordship had therefore been very well disposed to comply with the royal recommendation.

"November 30. — The great pleasure of a letter from Lord Dudley, informing me that he has received his Majesty's commands to put down the name of my son Charles for the first vacancy that shall occur in the Foreign Office, and at the same time to acquaint me with his gracious intentions, which were



signified in language the most gratifying to me. This makes me really feel light and happy, and most grateful to the kind and gracious sovereign who has always shown, I may say, so much friendship towards me. Would to God the King's errand might lie in the cadger's gait, that I might have some better way of showing my feelings than merely by a letter of thanks, or this private memorandum of my gratitude. Public affairs look awkward. The present Ministry are neither Whig nor Tory, and divested of the support of either of the great parties of the state, stand supported by the will of the sovereign alone. This is not constitutional, and though it may be a temporary augmentation of the Prince's personal influence, yet it cannot but prove hurtful to the Crown upon the whole, by tending to throw that responsibility on him of which the law has deprived him. I pray to God I may be wrong, but I think an attempt to govern par bascule, by trimming betwixt the opposite parties, is equally unsafe for the Crown, and detrimental to the country, and cannot do for a long time. That with a neutral Administration, this country, hard ruled at any time, can be long governed, I for one do not believe. God send the good King, to whom I owe so much, as safe and honourable an extrication as the circumstances render possible."

The dissolution of the Goderich Cabinet confirmed very soon these shrewd guesses; and Sir Walter anticipated nothing but good from the Premiership of the Duke of Wellington.

The settlement of Charles Scott was rapidly followed by more than one fortunate incident in Sir Walter's literary and pecuniary history. The first Tales of a Grandfather appeared early in December, and their reception was more rapturous than that of any one of his works since Ivanhoe. He had solved for the first time the problem of narrating history, so as at once to excite and gratify the curiosity of youth, and please and instruct the wisest of mature minds. The popularity of the book has grown with every year that has since elapsed; it is equally prized in the library, the boudoir, the schoolroom, and the nursery; it is adopted as the happiest of manuals, not only in Scotland, but wherever the English tongue is spoken; nay, it is to be seen in the hands of old and young all over the civilized world, and has, I have little doubt, extended the knowledge of Scottish history in quarters where little or no interest had ever before been awakened as to any other parts of that subject, except those immediately connected with Mary Stuart and the Chevalier. This success effectually rebuked the trepidation of the author's bookseller and printer, and inspired the former with new courage as to a step which he had for some time been meditating, and which had given rise to many a long and anxious discussion between him and Sir Walter.

The question as to the property of the Life of Napoleon and Woodstock having now been settled by the arbiter (Lord Newton) in favour of the author, the relative affairs of Sir Walter and the creditors of Constable were so simplified, that the trustee on that sequestrated estate resolved to bring into the market, with the concurrence of Ballantyne's trustees, and without farther delay, a variety of very valuable copyrights. This important sale comprised Scott's novels from Waverley to Quentin Durward inclusive, besides a majority of the shares of the Poetical Works.

Mr. Cadell's family and private friends were extremely desirous that he should purchase part at least of these copyrights; and Sir Walter's were not less so that he should seize this last opportunity of recovering a share

in the prime fruits of his genius. The relations by this time established between him and Cadell were those of strict confidence and kindness; and both saw well that the property would be comparatively lost, were it not secured that thenceforth the whole should be managed as one unbroken concern. It was in the success of an uniform edition of the Waverley Novels, with prefaces and notes by the Author, that both anticipated the means of finally extinguishing the debt of Ballantyne and Co.; and, after some demur, the trustees of that house's creditors were wise enough to adopt their views. The result was, that the copyrights exposed to sale for behoof of Constable's creditors were purchased, one half for Sir Walter, the other half for Cadell, at the price of £8500 - a sum which was considered large at the moment. but which the London competitors soon afterwards convinced themselves they ought to have outbid.

The Diary says: -

"December 17.— Sent off the new beginning of the Chronicles to Ballantyne. I hate cancels—they are a double labour. Mr. Cowan, trustee for Constable's creditors, called in the morning by appointment, and we talked about the sale of the copyrights of Waverley, &c. It is to be hoped the high upset price fixed (£5000) will

'Fright the fuds Of the pock-puds.'

This speculation may be for good or for evil, but it tends incalculably to increase the value of such copyrights as remain in my own person; and if a handsome and cheap edition of the whole, with notes, can be instituted in conformity with Cadell's plan, it must prove a mine of wealth for my creditors. It is possible, no doubt, that the works may lose their effect on the public mind; but this must be risked, and I think the chances are greatly in our favour. Death (my own, I mean) would improve the property, since an edition with a Life would sell like wildfire. Perhaps those who read this prophecy may shake their heads and say—'Poor fellow, he little thought how he should see the public interest in him and his extinguished, even during his natural existence.' It may be so, but I will hope better. This I know, that no literary speculation ever succeeded with me but where my own works were concerned; and that, on the other hand, these have rarely failed.

"December 20. — Anent the copyrights — the pock-puds were not frightened by our high price. They came on briskly, four or five bidders abreast, and went on till the lot was knocked down to Cadell at £8500; a very large sum certainly, yet he has been offered profit on it already. The activity of the contest serves to show the value of the property. On the whole, I am greatly pleased with the acquisition."

Well might the "pockpuddings"—the English booksellers—rue their timidity on this day; but it was the most lucky one that ever came for Sir Walter Scott's creditors. A dividend of six shillings in the pound was paid at this Christmas on their whole claims. The result of their high-hearted debtor's exertions, between January 1826 and January 1828, was in all very nearly £40,000. No literary biographer, in all likelihood, will ever have such another fact to record. The creditors unanimously passed a vote of thanks for the indefatigable industry which had achieved so much for their behoof.

On returning to Abbotsford at Christmas, after completing these transactions, he says in his Diary: —

"My reflections in entering my own gate to-day were of a very different and more pleasing cast than those with which I left this place about six weeks ago. I was then in doubt whether I should fly my country, or become avowedly bank-

rupt, and surrender up my library and household furniture, with the liferent of my estate, to sale. A man of the world will say I had better done so. No doubt, had I taken this course at once, I might have employed the money I have made since the insolvency of Constable and Robinson's houses in compounding my debts. But I could not have slept sound, as I now can under the comfortable impression of receiving the thanks of my creditors, and the conscious feeling of discharging my duty as a man of honour and honesty. I see before me a long, tedious, and dark path, but it leads to stainless reputation. If I die in the harrows, as is very likely, I shall die with honour; if I achieve my task, I shall have the thanks of all concerned, and the approbation of my own conscience. And so, I think, I can fairly face the return of Christmasday."

And again, on the 31st December, he says —

"Looking back to the conclusion of 1826, I observe that the last year ended in trouble and sickness, with pressures for the present and gloomy prospects for the future. The sense of a great privation so lately sustained, together with the very doubtful and clouded nature of my private affairs, pressed hard upon my mind. I am now restored in constitution; and though I am still on troubled waters, yet I am rowing with the tide, and less than the continuation of my exertions of 1827 may, with God's blessing, carry me successfully through 1828, when we may gain a more open sea, if not exactly a safe port, Above all, my children are well. Sophia's situation excites some natural anxiety; but it is only the accomplishment of the burden imposed on her sex. Walter is happy in the view of his majority, on which matter we have favourable hopes from the Horse-Guards. Anne is well and happy. Charles's entry on life under the highest patronage, and in a line for which, I hope, he is qualified, is about to take place presently.

"For all these great blessings, it becomes me well to be thankful to God, who, in his good time and good pleasure, sends us good as well as evil."

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CHAPTER LXXV.

The "Opus Magnum"— "Religious Discourses, by a Layman"— Letters to George Huntly Gordon, Cadell, and Ballantyne— Heath's Keepsake, &c.— Arniston— Dalhousie— Prisons— Dissolution of Yeomanry Cavalry— The Fair Maid of Perth published.

JAN. - APRIL 1828.

WITH the exception of a few weeks occupied by an excursion to London, which business of various sorts had rendered necessary, the year 1828 was spent in the same assiduous labour as 1827. The commercial transaction completed at Christmas cleared the way for two undertakings, which would of themselves have been enough to supply desk-work in abundance; and Sir Walter appears to have scarcely passed a day on which something was not done for them. I allude to Cadell's plan of a new edition of the poetry, with biographical prefaces; and the still more extensive one of an uniform reprint of the Novels, each to be introduced by an account of the hints on which it had been founded, and illustrated throughout by historical and antiquarian annotations. On this last, commonly mentioned in the Diary as the Opus Magnum, Sir Walter bestowed pains commensurate with its importance; - and in the execution of the very delicate task which either scheme imposed, he has certainly displayed such a combination of frankness and

modesty as entitles him to a high place in the short list of graceful autobiographers. True dignity is always simple; and perhaps true genius, of the highest class at least, is always humble. These operations took up much time; — yet he laboured hard this year, both as a novelist and a historian. He contributed, moreover, several articles to the Quarterly Review and the Bannatyne Club library; and to the Journal conducted by Mr. Gillies, an excellent Essay on Molière; this last being again a free gift to the Editor.

But the first advertisement of 1828 was of a new order: and the announcement that the Author of Waverley had Sermons in the press, was received perhaps with as much incredulity in the clerical world, as could have been excited among them by that of a romance from the Archbishop of Canterbury. A thin octavo volume, entitled "Religious Discourses by a Layman," and having "W. S." at the foot of a short preface, did, however, issue in the course of the spring, and from the shop, that all might be in perfect keeping, of Mr. Colburn, a bookseller then known almost exclusively as the standing purveyor of what is called "light reading"novels of "fashionable life," and the like pretty ephemera. I am afraid that the "Religious Discourses," too, would, but for the author's name, have had a brief existence; but the history of their composition, besides sufficiently explaining the humility of these tracts in a literary as well as a theological point of view, will, I hope, gratify most of my readers.

It may perhaps be remembered, that Sir Walter's cicerone over Waterloo, in August 1815, was a certain Major Pryse Gordon, then on half-pay and resident at Brussels. The acquaintance, until they met at Sir Fred-

erick Adam's table, had been very slight - nor was it ever carried further; but the Major was exceedingly attentive during Scott's stay, and afterwards took some pains about collecting little reliques of the battle for Abbotsford. One evening the poet supped at his house, and there happened to sit next him the host's eldest son. then a lad of nineteen, whose appearance and situation He had been destined for the much interested him. Church of Scotland, but, as he grew up, a deafness, which had come on him in boyhood, became worse and worse, and at length his friends feared that it must incapacitate him for the clerical function. He had gone to spend the vacation with his father, and Sir Frederick Adam, understanding how he was situated, offered him a temporary appointment as a clerk in the Commissariat, which he hoped to convert into a permanent one, in case the war continued. At the time of Scott's arrival that prospect was wellnigh gone, and the young man's infirmity, his embarrassment, and other things to which his own memorandum makes no allusion, excited the visiter's sympathy. Though there were lion-hunters of no small consequence in the party, he directed most of his talk into the poor clerk's ear-trumpet; and at parting, begged him not to forget that he had a friend on Tweedside.

A couple of years elapsed before he heard anything more of Mr. Gordon, who then sent him his father's little *spolia* of Waterloo, and accompanied them by a letter explaining his situation, and asking advice, in a style which renewed and increased Scott's favourable impression. He had been dismissed from the Commissariat at the general reduction of our establishments, and was now hesitating whether he had better take up again

his views as to the Kirk, or turn his eyes towards English orders: and in the meantime he was anxious to find some way of lightening to his parents, by his own industry, the completion of his professional education. There ensued a copious correspondence between him and Scott, who gave him on all points of his case most paternal advice, and accompanied his counsels with offers of pecuniary assistance, of which the young man rarely availed himself. At length he resolved on reëntering the Divinity Class at Aberdeen, and in due time was licensed by the Presbytery there as a Preacher of the Gospel; but though with good connexions, for he was "sprung of Scotia's gentler blood," his deafness operated as a serious bar to his obtaining the incumbency of a The provincial Synod pronounced his deafness an insuperable objection, and the case was referred to the General Assembly. That tribunal heard Mr. Gordon's cause maintained by all the skill and eloquence of Mr. Jeffrey, whose good offices had been secured by Scott's intervention, and they overruled the decision of the Presbytery. But Gordon, in the course of the discussion, gathered the conviction, that a man almost literally stone-deaf could not discharge some of the highest duties of a parish-priest in a satisfactory manner, and he with honourable firmness declined to take advantage of the judgment of the Supreme Court. Meantime he had been employed, from the failure of John Ballantyne's health downwards, as the transcriber of the Waverley MSS. for the press, in which capacity he displayed every quality that could endear an amanuensis to an author; and when the disasters of 1826 rendered it unnecessary for Scott to have his MS. copied, he exerted himself to procure employment for his young friend in one of the

Government offices in London. Being backed by the kindness of the late Duke of Gordon, his story found favour with the then Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Lushington—and Mr. Gordon was named assistant private secretary to that gentleman. The appointment was temporary, but he so pleased his chief that there was hope of better things by and by.—Such was his situation at Christmas 1827; but that being his first Christmas in London, it was no wonder that he then discovered himself to have somewhat miscalculated about money matters. In a word, he knew not whither to look at the moment for extrication, until he bethought him of the following little incident of his life at Abbotsford.

He was spending the autumn of 1824 there, daily copying the MS. of Redgauntlet, and working at leisure hours on the Catalogue of the Library, when the family observed him to be labouring under some extraordinary depression of mind. It was just then that he had at length obtained the prospect of a Living, and Sir Walter was surprised that this should not have exhilarated him. Gently sounding the trumpet, however, he discovered that the agitation of the question about the deafness had shaken his nerves — his scruples had been roused — his conscience was sensitive, - and he avowed that, though he thought, on the whole, he ought to go through with the business, he could not command his mind so as to prepare a couple of sermons, which, unless he summarily abandoned his object, must be produced on a certain day - then near at hand - before his Presbytery. Walter reminded him that his exercises when on trial for the Probationership had given satisfaction; but nothing he could say was sufficient to re-brace Mr. Gordon's spirits, and he at length exclaimed, with tears, that his

pen was powerless, - that he had made fifty attempts. and saw nothing but failure and disgrace before him. Scott answered, "My good young friend, leave this matter to me - do you work away at the Catalogue. and I'll write for you a couple of sermons that shall pass muster well enough at Aberdeen." Gordon assented with a sigh: and next morning Sir Walter gave him the MS. of the "Religious Discourses." On reflection, Mr. Gordon considered it quite impossible to produce them as his own, and a letter to be quoted immediately will show, that he by and by had written others for himself in a style creditable to his talents, though, from circumstances above explained, he never delivered them at Aberdeen. But the "Two Discourses" of 1824 had remained in his hands; and it now occurred to him that, if Sir Walter would allow him to dispose of these to some bookseller, they might possibly bring a price that would float him over his little difficulties of Christmas.

Scott consented; and Gordon got more than he had ventured to expect for his MS. But since this matter has been introduced, I must indulge myself with a little retrospect, and give a few specimens of the great author's correspondence with this amiable dependent. The series now before me consists of more than forty letters to Mr. Gordon.



[&]quot;Edinburgh, 5th January 1817.

[&]quot;.... I am very sorry your malady continues to distress you; yet while one's eyes are spared to look on the wisdom of former times, we are the less entitled to regret that we hear less of the folly of the present. The Church always presents a safe and respectable asylum, and has many mansions. But in fact, the great art of life, so far as I have been able to ob-

serve, consists in fortitude and perseverance. I have rarely seen, that a man who conscientiously devoted himself to the studies and duties of any profession, and did not omit to take fair and honourable opportunities of offering himself to notice when such presented themselves, has not at length got forward. The mischance of those who fall behind, though flung upon fortune, more frequently arises from want of skill and perseverance. Life, my young friend, is like a game at cards our hands are alternately good or bad, and the whole seems at first glance to depend on mere chance. But it is not so, for in the long run the skill of the player predominates over the casualties of the game. Therefore, do not be discouraged with the prospect before you, but ply your studies hard, and qualify yourself to receive fortune when she comes your way. I shall have pleasure at any time in hearing from you, and more especially in seeing you."

"24th July 1818.

"..... I send you the Travels of Thiodolf.* Perhaps you might do well to give a glance over Tytler's Principles of Translation, ere you gird up your loins to the undertaking. If the gods have made you poetical, you should imitate, rather than attempt a literal translation of, the verses interspersed; and, in general, I think both the prose and verse might be improved by compression. If you find the versification a difficult or unpleasant task, I must translate for you such parts of the poetry as may be absolutely necessary for carrying on the story, which will cost an old hack like me very little trouble. I would have you, however, by all means try yourself."....

[&]quot;14th October 1818.

[&]quot;..... I am greatly at a loss what could possibly make you think you had given me the slightest offence. If that

* A novel by the Baron de la Motte Fouqué.

very erroneous idea arose from my silence and short letters, I must plead both business and laziness, which makes me an indifferent correspondent; but I thought I had explained in my last that which it was needful that you should know.

"I have said nothing on the delicate confidence you have reposed in me. I have not forgotten that I have been young, and must therefore be sincerely interested in those feelings which the best men entertain with most warmth. At the same time, my experience makes me alike an enemy to premature marriage and to distant engagements. The first adds to our individual cares the responsibility for the beloved and helpless pledges of our affection, and the last are liable to the most cruel disappointments. But, my good young friend, if you have settled your affections upon a worthy object, I can only hope that your progress in life will be such as to make you look forward with prudence to a speedy union."....

" 12th June 1820.

"..... I am very sorry for your illness, and your unpleasant and uncertain situation, for which, unfortunately, I can give no better consolation than in the worn-out and wearying-out word, patience. What you mention of your private feelings on an interesting subject, is indeed distressing; but assure yourself that scarce one person out of twenty marries his first love, and scarce one out of twenty of the remainder has cause to rejoice at having done so. What we love in those early days is generally rather a fanciful creation of our own than a reality. We build statues of snow, and weep when they melt."....

" 12th April 1825.

"My Dear Mr. Gordon, —I would have made some additions to your sermon with great pleasure, but it is with even more than great pleasure that I assure you it needs none. It



is a most respectable discourse, with good divinity in it, which is always the marrow and bones of a Concio ad clerum, and you may pronounce it, meo periculo, without the least danger of failure or of unpleasant comparisons. I am not fond of Mr. Irving's species of eloquence, consisting of outré flourishes and extravagant metaphors. The eloquence of the pulpit should be of a chaste and dignified character; earnest, but not high-flown and ecstatic, and consisting as much in close reasoning as in elegant expression. It occurs to me as a good topic for more than one discourse, - the manner in which the heresies of the earlier Christian Church are treated in the Acts and the Epistles. It is remarkable, that while the arguments by which they are combated are distinct, clear, and powerful, the inspired writers have not judged it proper to go beyond general expressions, respecting the particular heresies which they combated. If you look closely, there is much reason in this. In general, I would say, that on entering on the clerical profession, were it my case, I should be anxious to take much pains with my sermons, and the studies on which they must be founded. Nothing rewards itself so completely as exercise. whether of the body or mind. We sleep sound, and our waking hours are happy, because they are employed; and a little sense of toil is necessary to the enjoyment of leisure. even when earned by study and sanctioned by the discharge of duty. I think most clergymen diminish their own respectability by falling into indolent habits, and what players call walking through their part. You, who have to beat up against an infirmity, and, it may be, against some unreasonable prejudices arising from that infirmity, should determine to do the thing not only well, but better than others."

[&]quot;To G. Huntly Gordon, Esq., Treasury, London.

[&]quot;28th December 1827.

[&]quot;Dear Gordon,—As I have no money to spare at present, I find it necessary to make a sacrifice of my own scruples, to

relieve you from serious difficulties. The enclosed will entitle you to deal with any respectable bookseller. You must tell the history in your own way as shortly as possible. All that is necessary to say is, that the discourses were written to oblige a young friend. It is understood my name is not to be put on the title-page, or blazed at full length in the preface. You may trust that to the newspapers.

"Pray, do not think of returning any thanks about this; it is enough that I know it is likely to serve your purpose. But use the funds arising from this unexpected source with prudence, for such fountains do not spring up at every place of the desert. — I am, in haste, ever yours most truly,

"WALTER SCOTT."

The reader will, I believe, forgive this retrospect; and be pleased to know that the publication of the sermons answered the purpose intended. Mr. Gordon now occupies a permanent and respectable situation in her Majesty's Stationery Office; and he concludes his communication to me with expressing his feeling that his prosperity "is all clearly traceable to the kindness of Sir Walter Scott."

In a letter to me about this affair of the Discourses, Sir Walter says, "Poor Gordon has got my leave to make a kirk and a mill of my Sermons—heaven save the mark! Help him, if you can, to the water of Pactolus and a swapping thirlage." The only entries in the Diary, which relate to the business, are the following:—

"December 28. Huntly Gordon writes me in despair about £180 of debt which he has incurred. He wishes to publish two sermons which I wrote for him when he was taking orders; and he would get little money for them with-



out my name. People may exclaim against the undesired and unwelcome zeal of him who stretched his hands to help the ark over, with the best intentions, and cry sacrilege. And vet they will do me gross injustice, for I would, if called upon. die a martyr for the Christian religion, so completely is (in my poor opinion) its divine origin proved by its beneficial effects on the state of society. Were we but to name the abolition of slavery and polygamy, how much has, in these two words, been granted to mankind in the lessons of our Saviour! - January 10, 1828. Huntly Gordon has disposed of the two sermons to the bookseller, Colburn, for £250; well sold, I think, and to go forth immediately. I would rather the thing had not gone there, and far rather that it had gone nowhere, - yet hang it, if it makes the poor lad easy, what needs I fret about it? After all, there would be little grace in doing a kind thing, if you did not suffer pain or inconvenience upon the score."

The next literary entry is this: -

"Mr. Charles Heath, the engraver, invites me to take charge of a yearly publication called the Keepsake, of which the plates are beyond comparison beautiful, but the letterpress indifferent enough. He proposes £800 a-year if I would become editor, and £400 if I would contribute from seventy to one hundred pages. I declined both, but told him I might give him some trifling thing or other. To become the stipendiary editor of a New-Year's-Gift Book is not to be thought of, nor could I agree to work regularly, for any quantity of supply, at such a publication. Even the pecuniary view is not flattering, though Mr. Heath meant it should be so. One hundred of his close printed pages, for which he offers £400, are nearly equal to one volume of a novel. Each novel of three volumes brings £4000, and I remain proprietor of the mine after the first ore is scooped out."

The result of this negotiation with Mr. Heath was, that he received, for £500, the liberty of printing in his

Keepsake the long forgotten juvenile drama of the House of Aspen, with My Aunt Margaret's Mirror, and two other little tales, which had been omitted, at Ballantyne's entreaty, from the second Chronicles of Croftangry. But Sir Walter regretted having meddled in any way with the toyshop of literature, and would never do so again, though repeatedly offered very large sums—nor even when the motive of private regard was added, upon Mr. Allan Cunningham's lending his name to one of these painted bladders.

In the same week that Mr. Heath made his proposition, Sir Walter received another, which he thus disposes of in his Diary:—

"I have an invitation from Messrs. Saunders and Ottley, booksellers, offering me from £1500 to £2000 annually to conduct a journal; but I am their humble servant. I am too indolent to stand to that sort of work, and I must preserve the undisturbed use of my leisure, and possess my soul in quiet. A large income is not my object; I must clear my debts; and that is to be done by writing things of which I can retain the property. Made my excuses accordingly."

In January 1828, reprints both of the Grandfather's Tales and of the Life of Napoleon were called for; and both so suddenly, that the booksellers would fain have distributed the volumes among various printers in order to catch the demand. Ballantyne heard of this with natural alarm; and Scott, in the case of the Napoleon, conceived that his own literary character was trifled with, as well as his old ally's interests. On receiving James's first appeal — that as to the Grandfather's Stories, he wrote thus: — I need scarcely add, with the desired effect.



" To Robert Cadell, Esq., Edinburgh.

"Abbotsford, 3d January 1828.

"My Dear Sir, — I find our friend James Ballantyne is very anxious about printing the new edition of the Tales, which I hope you will allow him to do, unless extreme haste be an extreme object. I need not remind you that we three are like the shipwrecked crew of a vessel, cast upon a desolate island, and fitting up out of the remains of a gallant bark such a cock-boat as may transport us to some more hospitable shore. Therefore we are bound by the strong tie of common misfortune to help each other, in so far as the claim of self-preservation will permit, and I am happy to think the plank is large enough to float us all.

"Besides my feelings for my own old friend and school-fellow, with whom I have shared good and bad weather for so many years, I must also remember that, as in your own case, his friends have made great exertions to support him in the printing-office, under an implied hope and trust that these publications would take in ordinary cases their usual direction. It is true, no engagement was or could be proposed to this effect; but it was a reasonable expectation, which influenced kind and generous men, and I incline to pay every respect to it in my power.

"Messrs. Longman really keep matters a little too quiet for my convenience. The next thing they may tell me is, that Napoleon must go to press instantly to a dozen of printers. I must boot and saddle, off and away at a fortnight's warning. Now this I neither can nor will do. My character as a man of letters is deeply interested in giving a complete revisal of that work, and I wish to have time to do so without being hurried. Yours very truly, W. S."

The following specimens of his "skirmishes," as he used to call them, with Ballantyne, while the Fair Maid

of Perth was in hand, are in keeping with this amiable picture: —

"My Dear James — I return the proofs of Tales, and send some leaves copy of St. Valentine's. Pray get on with this in case we should fall through again. When the press does not follow me, I get on slowly and ill, and put myself in mind of Jamie Balfour, who could run when he could not stand still. We must go on or stop altogether. Yours," &c. &c.

"I think you are hypercritical in your commentary. I counted the hours with accuracy. In the morning the citizens went to Kinfauns and returned. This puts over the hour of noon, then the dinner-hour. Afterwards, and when the king has had his devotions in private, comes all the scene in the court-yard. The sun sets at half-past five on the 14th February; and if we suppose it to be within an hour of evening, it was surely time for a woman who had a night to put over, to ask where she should sleep. This is the explanation, — apply it as you please to the text; for you who see the doubt can best clear it. Yours truly," &c.

"I cannot afford to be merciful to Master Oliver Proudfoot, although I am heartily glad there is any one of the personages sufficiently interesting to make you care whether he lives or dies. But it would cost my cancelling half a volume, and rather than do so, I would, like the valiant Baron of Clackmannan, kill the whole characters, the author, and the printer. Besides, entre nous, the resurrection of Athelstane was a botch. It struck me when I was reading Ivanhoe over the other day.

"I value your criticism as much as ever; but the worst is, my faults are better known to myself than to you. Tell a young beauty that she wears an unbecoming dress, or an ill-fashioned ornament, or speaks too loud, or commits any other



mistake which she can correct, and she will do so, if she has sense, and a good opinion of your taste. But tell a fading beauty, that her hair is getting gray, her wrinkles apparent, her gait heavy, and that she has no business in a ball-room but to be ranged against the wall as an evergreen, and you will afflict the poor old lady, without rendering her any service. She knows all that better than you. I am sure the old lady in question takes pain enough at her toilette, and gives you, her trusty suivante, enough of trouble. Yours truly,

" W. S."

These notes to the printer appear to have been written at Abbotsford during the holidays. On his way back to Edinburgh, Sir Walter halts for a Saturday and Sunday at Arniston, and the Diary on the second day says —

"Went to Borthwick church with the family, and heard a well-composed, well-delivered, sensible discourse from Mr. Wright.* After sermon we looked at the old castle, which made me an old man. The castle was not a bit older for the twenty-five years which had passed away, but the ruins of the visiter are very apparent. To climb up ruinous staircases, to creep through vaults and into dungeons, were not the easy labours but the positive sports of my younger years; but I thought it convenient to attempt no more than the access to the large and beautiful hall, in which, as it is somewhere described, an armed horseman might brandish his lance.† This feeling of growing inability is painful to one who boasted, in spite of infirmity, great boldness and dexterity in such feats; the boldness remains, but hand and foot, grip and accuracy of step, have altogether failed me - the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak; and so I must retreat into the invalided corps. and tell them of my former exploits, which may very likely

^{*} The Rev. T. Wright, of Borthwick, is the author of various popular works, — The Morning and Evening Sacrifice, &c. &c.

[†] See Scott's account of Borthwick Castle in his Prose Miscellanies, vol. vii. (Edin. Ed.)

pass for lies. We then drove to Dalhousie, where the gallant Earl, who has done so much to distinguish the British name in every quarter of the globe, is repairing the castle of his ancestors, which of yore stood a siege against John of Gaunt. I was his companion at school, where he was as much beloved by his playmates, as he has been ever respected by his companions in arms and the people over whom he had been deputed to exercise the authority of his sovereign. He was always steady, wise, and generous. The old Castle of Dalhousie — seu potius Dalwolsey — was mangled by a fellow called, I believe, Douglas, who destroyed, as far as in him lay, its military and baronial character, and roofed it after the fashion of a poor's-house. Burn * is now restoring and repairing in the old taste, and, I think, creditably to his own feeling. God bless the roof-tree!

"We returned home by the side of the South Esk, where I had the pleasure to see that Robert Dundas† is laying out his woods with taste, and managing them with care. His father and uncle took notice of me when I was 'a fellow of no mark nor likelihood,'‡ and I am always happy in finding myself in the old oak room at Arniston, where I have drank many a merry bottle, and in the fields where I have seen many a hare killed."

At the opening of the Session next day, he misses one of his dear old colleagues of the table, Mr. Mackenzie, who had long been the official preses in ordinary of the Writers to the Signet. The Diary has a pithy entry here:—

- "My good friend Colin Mackenzie proposes to retire, from indifferent health. A better man never lived eager to serve every one a safeguard over all public business which
 - * William Burn, Esq., architect, Edinburgh.
- † R. Dundas of Arniston, Esq., the worthy representative of an illustrious lineage, died at his paternal seat in June 1838.
 - ‡ King Henry IV. Act. III. Scene 2. Vol. VIII. 18

came through his hands. As Deputy-keeper of the Signet he will be much missed. He had a patience in listening to every one, which is of infinite importance in the management of a public body; for many men care less to gain their point, than they do to play the orator, and be listened to for a certain time. This done, and due quantity of personal consideration being gained, the individual orator is usually satisfied with the reasons of the civil listener, who has suffered him to enjoy his hour of consequence."

The following passages appear (in various ways) too curious and characteristic to be omitted. He is working hard—alas! too hard—at the Fair Maid of Perth.

"February 17. - A hard day of work, being, I think, eight pages * before dinner. I cannot, I am sure, tell if it is worth marking down, that vesterday, at dinner-time, I was strangely haunted by what I would call the sense of preëxistence viz. a confused idea that nothing that passed was said for the first time - that the same topics had been discussed, and the same persons had stated the same opinions on them. It is true there might have been some ground for recollections, considering that three at least of the company were old friends, and had kept much company together; that is, Justice-Clerk, [Lord] Abercromby, and I. But the sensation was so strong as to resemble what is called a mirage in the desert, or a calenture on board of ship, when lakes are seen in the desert, and sylvan landscapes in the sea. It was very distressing yesterday, and brought to my mind the fancies of Bishop Berkeley about an ideal world. There was a vile sense of want of reality in all I did and said. It made me gloomy and out of spirits, though I flatter myself this was not observed. The bodily feeling which most resembles this unpleasing hallucination is the giddy state which follows profuse bleeding, when one feels as if he were walking on feather-beds and could not find a secure footing. I think the stomach has

* i. e. Forty pages of print, or very nearly.

something to do with it. I drank several glasses of wine, but these only augmented the disorder. I did not find the *in vino veritas* of the philosophers. Something of this insane feeling remains to-day, but a trifle only.

"February 20. — Another day of labour, but not so hard. I worked from eight till three with little intermission, but only accomplished four pages.

"A certain Mr. Mackay from Ireland called on me - an active agent, it would seem, about the reform of prisons. He exclaims - justly I doubt not - about the state of our Lockup House. For myself I have some distrust of the fanaticism even of philanthropy. A good part of it arises in general from mere vanity and love of distinction, gilded over to others and to themselves with some show of benevolent sentiment. The philanthropy of Howard, mingled with his ill-usage of his son, seems to have risen to a pitch of insanity. Yet without such extraordinary men, who call attention to the subject by their own peculiarities, prisons would have remained the same dungeons which they were forty or fifty years ago. I do not, however, see the propriety of making them dandy places of detention. They should be places of punishment, and that can hardly be if men are lodged better, and fed better, than when they are at large. I have never seen a plan for keeping in order these resorts of guilt and misery, without presupposing a superintendence of a kind which might perhaps be exercised, could we turn out upon the watch a guard of angels. But, alas! jailers and turnkeys are rather like angels of a different livery, nor do I see how it is possible to render them otherwise. Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? As to reformation. I have no great belief in it, when the ordinary classes of culprits, who are vicious from ignorance or habit, are the subjects of the experiment. 'A shave from a broken loaf' is thought as little of by the male set of delinquents as by the fair frail. The state of society now leads to such accumulations of humanity, that we cannot wonder if it ferment and reek like a compost dunghill. Nature intended that population

should be diffused over the soil in proportion to its extent. We have accumulated in huge cities and smothering manufactories the numbers which should be spread over the face of a country; and what wonder that they should be corrupted? We have turned healthful and pleasant brooks into morasses and pestiferous lakes. - what wonder the soil should be unhealthy? A great deal, I think, might be done by executing the punishment of death, without a chance of escape, in all cases to which it should be found properly applicable; of course these occasions being diminished to one out of twenty to which capital punishment is now assigned. Our ancestors brought the country to order by kilting thieves and banditti with strings. So did the French when at Naples, and bandits became for the time unheard of. When once men are taught that a crime of a certain character is connected inseparably with death, the moral habits of a population become altered, and you may in the next age remit the punishment which in this it has been necessary to inflict with stern severity.

"February 21. — Last night after dinner I rested from my work, and read the third series of Sayings and Doings, which shows great knowledge of life in a certain sphere, and very considerable powers of wit, which somewhat damages the effect of the tragic parts. But Theodore Hook is an able writer, and so much of his work is well said, that it will carry through what is indifferent. I hope the same good fortube for other folks.

"I am watching and waiting till I hit on some quaint and clever mode of extricating, but do not see a glimpse of any one. James B., too, discourages me a good deal by his silence, waiting, I suppose, to be invited to disgorge a full allowance of his critical bile. But he will wait long enough, for I am discouraged enough Now here is the advantage of Edinburgh. In the country, if a sense of inability once seizes me, it haunts me from morning to night; but in town the time is so occupied and frittered away by official duties and chance occupations, that you have not leisure to play Master Stephen,

and be melancholy and gentlemanlike.* On the other hand, you never feel in town those spirit-stirring influences—those glances of sunshine that make amends for clouds and mist. The country is said to be the quieter life; not to me, I am sure. In town, the business I have to do hardly costs me more thought than just occupies my mind, and I have as much of gossip and lady-like chat as consumes odd hours pleasantly enough. In the country I am thrown entirely on my own resources, and there is no medium betwixt happiness and the reverse.

"March 9. - I set about arranging my papers, a task which I always take up with the greatest possible ill-will, and which makes me cruelly nervous. I don't know why it should be so, for I have nothing particularly disagreeable to look at; far from it. I am better than I was at this time last year, my hopes firmer, my health stronger, my affairs bettered and bettering. Yet I feel an inexpressible nervousness in consequence of this employment. The memory, though it retains all that has passed, has closed sternly over it; and this rummaging, like a bucket dropped suddenly into a well, deranges and confuses the ideas which slumbered on the mind. I am nervous, and I am bilious - and, in a word, I am unhappy. This is wrong, very wrong; and it is reasonably to be apprehended that something of serious misfortune may be the deserved punishment of this pusillanimous lowness of spirits. Strange, that one who in most things may be said to have enough of the 'care na by,' should be subject to such vile weakness! - Drummond Hay, the antiquary and Lyon-her-I do not know anything which relieves the ald,† came in. mind so much from the sullens as trifling discussions about antiquarian old womanries. It is like knitting a stocking, diverting the mind without occupying it; or it is like, by Our

[†] W. A. Drummond Hay, Esq. (now consul at Tangier), was at this time the deputy of his cousin the Earl of Kinnoull, hereditary Lord Lyon King-at-Arms.



^{*} See Ben Jonson's Every Man in his Humour, Act I. Scene 3.

Lady, a mill-dam, which leads one's thoughts gently and imperceptibly out of the channel in which they are chafing and boiling. To be sure, it is only conducting them to turn a child's mill: what signifies that?—the diversion is a relief, though the object is of little importance. I cannot tell what we talked of.

"March 12. — I was sadly worried by the black dog this morning, that vile palpitation of the heart — that tremor cordis — that hysterical passion which forces unbidden sighs and tears, and falls upon a contented life like a drop of ink on white paper, which is not the less a stain because it carries no meaning. I wrote three leaves, however, and the story goes on.

"The dissolution of the Yeomanry was the act of the last Ministry. The present did not alter the measure, on account of the expense saved. I am, if not the very oldest Yeoman in Scotland, one of the oldest, and have seen the rise, progress, and now the fall of this very constitutional part of the national force. Its efficacy, on occasions of insurrection, was sufficiently proved in the Radical time. But besides, it kept up a spirit of harmony between the proprietors of land and the occupiers, and made them known to and beloved by each other; and it gave to the young men a sort of military and high-spirited character, which always does honour to a country. The manufacturers are in great glee on this occasion. I wish Parliament, as they have turned the Yeomen adrift somewhat scornfully, may not have occasion to roar them in again.

'The eldrich knight gave up his arms With many a sorrowful sigh.'"

Sir Walter finished his novel by the end of March, and immediately set out for London, where the last

budget of proof-sheets reached him. The Fair Maid was, and continues to be highly popular, and though never classed with his performances of the first file, it has undoubtedly several scenes equal to what the best of them can show, and is on the whole a work of brilliant variety and most lively interest. Though the Introduction of 1830 says a good deal on the most original character, that of Connochar, the reader may not be sorry to have one paragraph on that subject from the Diary:—

"December 5, 1827. The fellow that swam the Tay, and escaped, would be a good ludicrous character. But I have a mind to try him in the serious line of tragedy. Miss Baillie has made her Ethling a coward by temperament, and a hero when touched by filial affection. Suppose a man's nerves, supported by feelings of honour, or say by the spur of jealousy, sustaining him against constitutional timidity to a certain point, then suddenly giving way, I think something tragic might be produced. James Ballantyne's criticism is too much moulded upon the general taste of novels to admit (I fear) this species of reasoning. But what can one do? I am hard up as far as imagination is concerned, yet the world calls for novelty. Well, I'll try my brave coward or cowardly brave man. Valeat quantum."

The most careful critic that has handled this Tale, while he picks many holes in the plot, estimates the characters very highly. Of the glee-maiden, he well says — "Louise is a delightful sketch. — Nothing can be more exquisite than the manner in which her story is partly told, and partly hinted, or than the contrast between her natural and her professional character;" and after discussing at some length Rothsay, Henbane, Ramorney, &c. &c. he comes to Connochar.

"This character" (says Mr. Senior) "is perfectly tragic, neither too bad for sympathy, nor so good as to render his calamity revolting; but its great merit is the boldness with which we are called upon to sympathize with a deficiency which is generally the subject of unmitigated scorn. It is impossible not to feel the deepest commiseration for a youth cursed by nature with extreme sensibility both to shame and to fear, suddenly raised from a life of obscurity and peace, to head a confederacy of warlike savages, and forced immediately afterwards to elect, before the eyes of thousands, between a frightful death and an ignominious escape. The philosophy of courage and cowardice is one of the obscurest parts of human nature: partly because the susceptibility of fear is much affected by physical causes, by habit, and by example; and partly because it is a subject as to which men do not readily state the result of their own experience, and when they do state it, are not always implicitly believed. The subject has been further perplexed, in modern times, by the Scandinavian invention of the point of honour; -a doctrine which represents the manifestation, in most cases, of even wellfounded apprehension as fatal to all nobility of character; an opinion so little admitted by the classical world, that Homer has attributed to Hector, and Virgil to Turnus, certainly without supposing them dishonoured, precisely the same conduct of which Sir Walter makes suicide a consequence, without being an expiation. The result of all this has been, that scarcely any modern writers have made the various degrees of courage a source of much variety and discrimination of character. They have given us indeed plenty of fire-eaters and plenty of poltroons; and Shakspeare has painted in Falstaff constitutional intrepidity unsupported by honour; but by far the most usual modification of character among persons of vivid imagination, that in which a quick feeling of honour combats a quick apprehension of danger, a character which is the precise converse of Falstaff's, has been left almost untouched for Scott."

I alluded, in an early part of these Memoirs (Vol. III. p. 64), to a circumstance in Sir Walter's conduct, which it was painful to mention, and added, that in advanced life he himself spoke of it with a deep feeling of contri-Talking over this character of Connochar, just before the book appeared, he told me the unhappy fate of his brother Daniel, and how he had declined to be present at his funeral, or wear mourning for him. He added - "My secret motive, in this attempt, was to perform a sort of expiation to my poor brother's manes. have now learned to have more tolerance and compassion than I had in those days." I said he put me in mind of Samuel Johnson's standing bareheaded, in the last year of his life, on the market-place of Uttoxeter, by way of penance for a piece of juvenile irreverence towards his "Well, no matter," said he; "perhaps that's not the worst thing in the Doctor's story." *



^{*} See Croker's Boswell, octavo edition, vol. v. p. 288.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

Journey to London — Charlecote-Hall — Holland-House — Chiswick — Kensington Palace — Richmond Park — Gill's Hill — Boyd — Sotheby — Coleridge — Sir T. Acland — Bishop Copplestone — Mrs. Arkwright — Lord Sidmouth — Lord Alvanley — Northcote — Haydon — Chantrey and Cunningham — Anecdotes — Letters to Mr. Terry, Mrs. Lockhart, and Sir Alexander Wood — Death of Sir William Forbes — Reviews of Hajji Baba in England, and Davy's Salmonia — Anne of Geierstein begun — Second Series of the Grandfather's Tales published

APRIL - DEC. 1828.

SIR WALTER remained at this time six weeks in London. His eldest son's regiment was stationed at Hampton Court; the second had recently taken his desk at the Foreign Office, and was living at his sister's in the Regent's Park; he had thus looked forward to a happy meeting with all his family — but he encountered scenes of sickness and distress, in consequence of which I saw but little of him in general society. I shall cull a few notices from his private volume, which, however, he now opened much less regularly than formerly, and which offers a total blank for the latter half of the year 1828. In coming up to town, he diverged a little for the sake of seeing the interesting subject of the first of these extracts.

"April 8. — Learning from Washington Irving's description



of Stratford, that the hall of Sir Thomas Lucy, the Justice who rendered Warwickshire too hot for Shakspeare, was still extant, we went in quest of it.

"Charlecote is in high preservation, and inhabited by Mr. Lucy, descendant of the worshipful Sir Thomas. The Hall is about three hundred years old—a brick mansion, with a gatehouse in advance. It is surrounded by venerable oaks, realizing the imagery which Shakspeare loved to dwell upon; rich verdant pastures extend on every side, and numerous herds of deer were reposing in the shade. All showed that the Lucy family had retained their 'land and beeves.' While we were surveying the antlered old hall, with its painted glass and family pictures, Mr. Lucy came to welcome us in person, and to show the house, with the collection of paintings, which seems valuable.

"He told me the park from which Shakspeare stole the buck was not that which surrounds Charlecote, but belonged to a mansion at some distance, where Sir Thomas Lucy resided at the time of the trespass. The tradition went, that they hid the buck in a barn, part of which was standing a few years ago, but now totally decayed. This park no longer belongs to the Lucys. The house bears no marks of decay, but seems the abode of ease and opulence. There were some fine old books, and I was told of many more which were not in How odd, if a folio Shakspeare should be found amongst them. Our early breakfast did not permit taking advantage of an excellent repast offered by the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Lucy, the last a lively Welshwoman. This visit gave me great pleasure; it really brought Justice Shallow freshly before my eyes; - the luces 'which do become an old coat well,' * were not more plainly portrayed in his own armorials in the hall window, than was his person in my mind's eve. There is a picture shown as that of the old Sir Thomas, but Mr. Lucy conjectures it represents his son. There were three descents of the same name of Thomas. The portrait hath the 'eye severe, and beard of formal cut,' which fill up

Henry IV. Act III. Scene 2.



with judicial austerity the otherwise social physiognomy of the worshipful presence, with his 'fair round belly, with good capon lined.'*

"Regent's Park, April 17.— Made up my journal, which had fallen something behind. In this phantasmagorial place, the objects of the day come and depart like shadows. Went to Murray's, where I met Mr. Jacob, the great economist. He is proposing a mode of supporting the poor, by compelling them to labour under a species of military discipline. I see no objection to it, only it will make a rebellion to a certainty; and the tribes of Jacob will cut Jacob's throat.†

"Canning's conversion from popular opinions was strangely brought round. While he was studying in the Temple, and rather entertaining revolutionary opinions, Godwin sent to say that he was coming to breakfast with him, to speak on a subject of the highest importance. Canning knew little of him, but received his visit, and learned to his astonishment, that in expectation of a new order of things, the English Jacobins designed to place him, Canning, at the head of their revolution. He was much struck, and asked time to think what course he should take; - and having thought the matter over, he went to Mr. Pitt, and made the Anti-Jacobin confession of faith, in which he persevered until ---. Canning himself mentioned this to Sir W. Knighton upon occasion of giving a place in the Charter-House of some ten pounds a-year to Godwin's brother. He could scarce do less for one who had offered him the dictator's curule chair.

"Dined with Rogers with all my own family, and met Sharp, Lord John Russell, Jekyll, and others. The conversa-



^{*} As You Like It, Act I. Scene 7.

[†] Mr. Jacob published about this time some tracts concerning the Poor Colonies instituted by the King of the Netherlands; and they had marked influence in promoting the scheme of granting small allotments of land, on easy terms, to our cottagers; a scheme which, under the superintendence of Lord Braybroke and other noblemen and gentlemen in various districts of England, appears to have been attended with most beneficent results.

tion flagged as usual, and jokes were fired like minute-guns, producing an effect not much less melancholy. A wit should always have an atmosphere congenial to him, otherwise he will not shine.

"April 18. — Breakfasted at Hampstead with Joanna Baillie, and found that gifted person extremely well, and in the display of all her native knowledge of character and benevolence. I would give as much to have a capital picture of her as for any portrait in the world. Dined with the Dean of Chester, Dr. Philpotts —

'Where all above us was a solemn row
Of priests and deacons — so were all below.'*

There were the amiable Bishop of London,† Copplestone, whom I remember the first man at Oxford, now Bishop of Llandaff, and Dean of St. Paul's (strongly intelligent), and other dignitaries, of whom I knew less. It was a very pleasant day—the wigs against the wits for a guinea, in point of conversation. Anne looked queer, and much disposed to laugh, at finding herself placed betwixt two prelates in black petticoats.

"April 19.— Breakfasted with Sir George Phillips. Had his receipt against the blossoms being injured by frost. It consists in watering them plentifully before sunrise. This is like the mode of thawing beef. We had a pleasant morning, much the better that Morritt was with us. Dined with Sir Robert Inglis, and met Sir Thomas Acland, my old and kind friend. I was happy to see him. He may be considered now as the head of the religious party in the House of Commons—a powerful body, which Wilberforce long commanded. It is a difficult situation; for the adaptation of religious motives to earthly policy is apt—among the infinite delusions of the human heart—to be a snare. But I could confide much in

[†] Dr. Howley, raised in 1828 to the Archbishopric of Canterbury.



^{*} Grabbe's Tale of The Dumb Orators.

Sir T. Acland's honour and integrity. Bishop Bloomfield of Chester,* one of the most learned prelates of the Church, also dined.

"April 22. — Sophia left this to take down poor Johnnie to Brighton. I fear — I fear — but we must hope the best. Anne went with her sister.

"Lockhart and I dined with Sotheby, where we met a large party, the orator of which was that extraordinary man Coleridge. After eating a hearty dinner, during which he spoke not a word, he began a most learned harangue on the Samothracian Mysteries, which he regards as affording the germ of all tales about fairies, past, present, and to come. He then diverged to Homer, whose Iliad he considered as a collection of poems by different authors, at different times, during a century. Morritt, a zealous worshipper of the old bard, was incensed at a system which would turn him into a polytheist, gave battle with keenness, and was joined by Sotheby. Mr. Coleridge behaved with the utmost complaisance and temper, but relaxed not from his exertions. 'Zounds! I was never so bethumped with words.' Morritt's impatience must have cost him an extra sixpence-worth of snuff.

"April 23. — Dined at Lady Davy's with Lord and Lady Lansdowne and several other fine folks — my keys were sent to Bramah's with my desk, so I have not had the means of putting down matters regularly for several days. But who cares for the whipp'd cream of London society?

"April 24. — Spent the day in rectifying a road bill which drew a turnpike road through all the Darnicker's cottages, and a good field of my own. I got it put to rights. I was in some apprehension of being obliged to address the Committee. I did not fear them, for I suppose they are no wiser or better in their capacity of legislators than I find them every day at dinner. But I feared for my reputation. They would have



^{*} Translated to the See of London in 1828.

expected something better than the occasion demanded, or the individual could produce, and there would have been a failure. We had one or two persons at home in great wretchedness to dinner. I was not able to make any fight, and the evening went off as heavily as any I ever spent in the course of my life.

"April 25. — We dined at Richardson's with the two Chief-Barons of England * and Scotland,† — odd enough, the one being a Scotsman and the other an Englishman — far the pleasantest day we have had. I suppose I am partial, but I think the lawyers beat the bishops, and the bishops beat the wits.

" April 26. - This morning I went to meet a remarkable man, Mr. Boyd, of the house of Boyd, Benfield, & Co., which broke for a very large sum at the beginning of the war. Benfield went to the devil, I believe. Boyd, a man of very different stamp, went over to Paris to look after some large claims which his house had on the French Government. They were such as, it seems, they could not disavow, however they might be disposed to do so. But they used every effort, by foul means and fair, to induce Mr. Boyd to depart. He was reduced to poverty; he was thrown into prison; and the most flattering prospects were, on the other hand, held out to him if he would compromise his claims. His answer was uniform. It was the property, he said, of his creditors, and he would die ere he resigned it. His distresses were so great, that a subscription was made amongst his Scottish friends, to which I was a contributor, through the request of poor Will Erskine. After the peace of Paris the money was restored; and, faithful to the last, Boyd laid the whole at his creditors' disposal; stating, at the same time, that he was penniless, unless they consented to allow him a moderate sum in name of per centage, in consideration of twenty years of exile, poverty, and danger, all of which evils he might have escaped by surren-

[†] Sir Samuel Shepherd — Died at his house in Berkshire, 3d November 1840, aged 81.



^{*} Sir William Alexander.

dering their rights. Will it be believed that a muck-worm was base enough to refuse his consent to this deduction, alleging he had promised to his father, on his deathbed, never to compromise this debt? The wretch, however, was overpowered by the execrations of all around him, and concurred, with others, in setting apart for Mr. Boyd a sum of £40,000 or £50,000 out of half a million. This is a man to whom statues should be erected, and pilgrims should go to see him. He is good-looking, but old and infirm. Bright dark eyes and eye-brows contrast with his snowy hair, and all his features mark vigour of principle and resolution.

- "April 30. We have Mr. Adolphus, and his father,* the celebrated lawyer, to breakfast, and I was greatly delighted with the information of the latter. A barrister of extended practice, if he has any talents at all, is the best companion in the world. Dined with Lord Alvanley, and met Lord Fitzroy Somerset, Marquis and Marchioness of Worcester, &c. Lord Alvanley's wit made this party very pleasant, as well as the kind reception of my friends the Misses Arden.
- "May 1. Breakfasted with Lord and Lady Francis Gower, and enjoyed the splendid treat of hearing Mrs. Arkwright sing her own music, which is of the highest order; no forced vagaries of the voice, no caprices of tone, but all telling upon and increasing the feeling the words require. This is 'marrying music to immortal verse.' † Most people place them on separate maintenance.
- The elder Mr. Adolphus distinguished himself early in life by his History of the Reign of George III.
 - † Milton's L'Allegro, v. 187.
- † Among other songs, Mrs. Arkwright (see ante, p. 239), delighted Sir Walter with her own set of—

"Farewell! farewell! — The voice you hear Has left its last soft tone with you; Its next must join the seaward cheer, And shout among the shouting crew," &c.

He was sitting by me, at some distance from the lady, and whispered

: "May 2.— I breakfasted with a Mr.——, and narrowly escaped Mr. Irving, the celebrated preacher. The two ladies of his house seemed devoted to his opinions, and quoted him at every word. Mr.—— himself made some apologies for the Millennium. He is a neat antiquary, who thinks he ought to have been a man of letters, and that his genius has been misdirected in turning towards the law. I endeavoured to combat this idea, which his handsome house and fine family should have checked. Compare his dwelling, his comforts, with poor Tom Campbell's.

"May 5. — Breakfasted with Haydon, and sat for my head. I hope this artist is on his legs again. The King has given him a lift, by buying his clever picture of the Mock Election in the King's Bench prison, to which he is adding a second part, representing the chairing of the Member at the moment it was interrupted by the entry of the guards. Haydon was once a great admirer and companion of the champions of the Cockney school, and is now disposed to renounce them and their opinions. To this kind of conversation I did not give much way. A painter should have nothing to do with politics. He is certainly a clever fellow, but too enthusiastic, which, however, distress seems to have cured in some degree. His wife, a pretty woman, looked happy to see me, and that is something. Yet it was very little I could do to help them.*

"May 8. — Dined with Mrs. Alexander of Ballochmyle: — Lord and Lady Meath, who were kind to us in Ireland, and as she closed—"Capital words—whose are they? Byron's, I suppose, but I don't remember them." He was astonished when I told him that they were his own in the Pirate. He seemed pleased at the moment, but said next minute—"You have distressed me—if memory goes, all is up with me, for that was always my strong point."

* Sir Walter had shortly before been one of the contributors to a subscription for Mr. Haydon. The imprisonment from which this subscription relieved the artist produced, I need scarcely say, the picture mentioned in the Diary.

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a Scottish party, pleasant from having the broad accents and honest thoughts of my native land. A large circle in the evening. A gentleman came up to me and asked 'If I had seen the Casket, a curious work, the most beautiful, the most highly ornamented, — and then the editor or editress — a female so interesting, — might he ask a very great favour?' and out he pulled a piece of this pic-nic. I was really angry, and said, for a subscription he might command me, — for a contributor — No. This may be misrepresented, but I care not. Suppose this patron of the Muses gives five guineas to his distressed lady, he will think he does a great deal, yet he takes fifty from me with the calmest air in the world; for the communication is worth that if it be worth anything. There is no equalizing in the proposal.

"May 9. - Grounds of Foote's farce of the Cozeners. Lady - A certain Mrs. Phipps and aciously set up in a fashionable quarter of the town as a person through whose influence, properly propitiated, favours and situations of importance might certainly be obtained - always for a consideration. She cheated many people, and maintained the trick for months. One trick was to get the equipages of Lord North, and other persons of importance, to halt before her door, as if their owners were within. With respect to most of them, this was effected by bribing the drivers. But a gentleman who watched her closely, observed that Charles J. Fox actually left his carriage and went into the house. and this more than once. He was then, it must be noticed, in the Ministry. When Mrs. Phipps was blown up, this circumstance was recollected as deserving explanation, which Fox readily gave at Brookes's and elsewhere. It seems Mrs. Phipps had the art to persuade him that she had the disposal of what was then called a hyæna, that is, an heiress an immense Jamaica heiress, in whom she was willing to give or sell her interest to Charles Fox. Without having perfect confidence in the obliging proposal, the great statesman thought the thing worth looking after, and became so earnest

in it, that Mrs. Phipps was desirous to back out for fear of discovery. With this view she made confession one fine morning, with many professions of the deepest feelings, that the hyæna had proved a frail monster, and given birth to a girl or boy - no matter which. Even this did not make Charles quit chase of the hyæna. He intimated that if the cash was plenty and certain, the circumstance might be overlooked. Mrs. Phipps had nothing for it but to double the disgusting 'The poor child,' she said, 'was unfortunately of a mixed colour, somewhat tinged with the blood of Africa; no doubt Mr. Fox was himself very dark, and the circumstance might not draw attention,' &c. &c. This singular anecdote was touched upon by Foote, and is the cause of introducing the negress into the Cozeners, though no express allusion to Charles Fox was admitted. Lady — tells me that, in her youth, the laugh was universal so soon as the black woman appeared. It is one of the numerous hits that will be lost to posterity.

"This day, at the request of Sir William Knighton, I sat to Northcote, who is to introduce himself in the same piece in the act of painting me, like some pictures of the Venetian school. The artist is an old man, low in stature, and bent with years — fourscore at least. But the eye is quick and the countenance noble. A pleasant companion, familiar with recollections of Sir Joshua, Samuel Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, &c. His account of the last confirms all that we have heard of his oddities.

"May 11. — Another long sitting to the old Wizard Northcote. He really resembles an animated mummy. Dined with his Majesty in a very private party, five or six only being present. I was received most kindly, as usual. It is impossible to conceive a more friendly manner than that his Majesty used towards me. I spoke to Sir William Knighton about the dedication of the collected novels, and he says it will be highly well taken.*



^{*} The Magnum Opus was dedicated to King George IV.

"May 17. - A day of busy idleness. Richardson came and breakfasted with me, like a good fellow. Then I went to Mr. Chantrey.* Thereafter, about 12 o'clock, I went to breakfast the second at Lady Shellev's, where there was a great morning party. A young lady t begged a lock of my hair, which was not worth refusing. I stipulated for a kiss, which I was permitted to take. From this I went to the Duke of Wellington, who gave me some hints or rather details. wards I drove out to Chiswick, where I had never been before. A numerous and gay party were assembled to walk and enjoy the beauties of that Palladian dome. The place and highly ornamented gardens belonging to it resemble a picture of Watteau. There is some affectation in the picture, but in the ensemble the original looked very well. The Duke of Devonshire received every one with the best possible manners. The scene was dignified by the presence of an immense elephant, who, under charge of a groom, wandered up and down, giving an air of Asiatic pageantry to the entertainment. I was never before sensible of the dignity which largeness of size and freedom of movement give to this otherwise very ugly animal. As I was to dine at Holland-House, I did not partake in the magnificent repast which was offered to us, and took myself off about five o'clock. I contrived to make a demi-toilette at Holland-House, rather than drive all the way to London. Rogers came to the dinner, which was very entertaining. Lady Holland pressed us to stay all night, which we did accordingly.

"May 18. — The freshness of the air, the singing of the birds, the beautiful aspect of nature, the size of the venerable trees, gave me altogether a delightful feeling this morning. It seemed there was pleasure even in living and breathing without anything else. We (i. e. Rogers and I) wandered into a

^{*} Sir F. Chantrey was at this time executing his second bust of Sir Walter—that ordered by Sir Robert Peel, and which is now at Draycote. The reader will find more of this in a subsequent page.

[†] Miss Shelley - now the Honourable Mrs. George Edgecumbe.

green lane, bordered with fine trees, which might have been twenty miles from a town. It will be a great pity when this ancient house must come down and give way to rows and crescents. It is not that Holland-House is fine as a building,—on the contrary, it has a tumble-down look; and although decorated with the bastard Gothic of James I.'s time, the front is heavy. But it resembles many respectable matrons, who having been absolutely ugly during youth, acquire by age an air of dignity. But one is chiefly affected by the air of deep seclusion which is spread around the domain.

"May 19. — Dined by command with the Duchess of Kent. I was very kindly recognised by Prince Leopold - and presented to the little Princess Victoria - I hope they will change her name — the heir-apparent to the crown as things now stand. How strange that so large and fine a family as that of his late Majesty should have died off, or decayed into old age, with so few descendants. Prince George of Cumberland is, they say, a fine boy about nine years old - a bit of a This little lady is educating with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, 'You are heir of England.' I suspect, if we could dissect the little heart, we should find that some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter. She is fair, like the Royal family - the Duchess herself very pleasing and affable in her manners. I sat by Mr. Spring Rice, a very agreeable man. There were also Charles Wynn and his lady - and the evening, for a court evening, went agreeably off. I am commanded for two days by Prince Leopold, but will send excuses.

"May 24.— This day dined at Richmond Park with Lord Sidmouth. Before dinner his Lordship showed me letters which passed between his father, Dr. Addington, and the great Lord Chatham. There was much of that familiar friendship which arises, and must arise, between an invalid, the head of an invalid family, and their medical adviser, supposing the

last to be a wise and well-bred man. The character of Lord Chatham's handwriting is strong and bold, and his expressions short and manly. There are intimations of his partiality for William, whose health seems to have been precarious during boyhood. He talks of William imitating him in all he did, and calling for ale because his father was recommended to drink it. 'If I should smoke,' he said, 'William would instantly call for a pipe; and, he wisely infers, I must take care what I do. The letters of the late William Pitt are of great curiosity; but as, like all real letters of business, they only allude to matters with which his correspondent is well acquainted, and do not enter into details, they would require an ample commentary. I hope Lord Sidmouth will supply this, and have urged it as much as I can. I think, though I hate letters, and abominate interference, I will write to him on this subject. Here I met my old and much esteemed friend, Lord Stowell, looking very frail and even comatose. Quantum mutatus! He was one of the pleasantest men I ever knew.*

"Respecting the letters, I picked up from those of Pitt that he was always extremely desirous of peace with France, and even reckoned upon it at a moment when he ought to have despaired. I suspect this false view of the state of France (for such it was) which induced the British Minister to look for peace when there was no chance of it, damped his ardour in maintaining the war. He wanted the lofty ideas of his father - you read it in his handwriting, great statesman as he was. I saw a letter or two of Burke's, in which there is an epanchement de cœur not visible in those of Pitt, who writes like a Premier to his colleague. Burke was under the strange hallucination that his son, who predeceased him, was a man of greater talents than himself. On the contrary, he had little talent, and no nerve. On moving some resolutions in favour of the Catholics, which were ill-received by the House of Commons, young Burke actually ran away, which an Orangeman compared to a cross-reading in the newspapers. 'Yesterday

* Sir William Scott, Lord Stowell, died 28th January 1836, aged 90.



the Catholic resolutions were moved, &c. — but the pistol missing fire, the villains ran off!!'

"May 25. — After a morning of letter-writing, leave-taking, papers destroying, and God knows what trumpery, Sophia and I set out for Hampton Court, carrying with us the following lions and lionesses — Samuel Rogers, Tom Moore, Wordsworth, with wife and daughter. We were very kindly and properly received by Walter and his wife, and had a very pleasant day. At parting, Rogers gave me a gold-mounted pair of glasses, which I will not part with in a hurry. I really like S. R., and have always found him most friendly."

This is the last London entry; but I must mention two circumstances that occurred during that visit. Breakfasting one morning with Allan Cunningham, and commending one of his publications, he looked round the table, and said, "What are you going to make of all these boys, Allan?" "I ask that question often at my own heart," said Allan, "and I cannot answer it." "What does the eldest point to?" "The callant would fain be a soldier, Sir Walter - and I have a half promise of a commission in the King's army for him; but I wish rather he could go to India, for there the pay is a maintenance, and one does not need interest at every step to get on." Scott dropped the subject, but went an hour afterwards to Lord Melville (who was now President of the Board of Control), and begged a cadetship for young Cunningham. Lord Melville promised to inquire if he had one at his disposal, in which case he would gladly serve the son of honest Allan; but the point being thus left doubtful, Scott, meeting Mr. John Loch, one of the East-India

Directors, at dinner the same evening, at Lord Stafford's. applied to him, and received an immediate assent. reaching home at night, he found a note from Lord Melville, intimating that he had inquired, and was happy in complying with his request. Next morning, Sir Walter appeared at Sir F. Chantrey's breakfast-table, and greeted the sculptor (who is a brother of the angle) with - "I suppose it has sometimes happened to you to catch one trout (which was all you thought of) with the fly, and another with the bobber. I have done so, and I think I Don't you think Cunningham shall land them both. would like very well to have cadetships for two of those fine lads?" "To be sure he would," said Chantrey, "and if you'll secure the commissions, I'll make the outfit easy," Great was the joy in Allan's household on this double good news; but I should add, that before the thing was done he had to thank another benefactor. Lord Melville, after all, went out of the Board of Control before he had been able to fulfil his promise; but his successor, Lord Ellenborough, on hearing the circumstances of the case, desired Cunningham to set his mind at rest; and both his young men are now prospering in the India service.

Another friend's private affairs occupied more unpleasantly much of Scott's attention during this residence in London. He learned shortly after his arrival, that misfortunes (as foreseen by himself in May 1825) had gathered over the management of the Adelphi Theatre.* The following letter has been selected from among several on the same painful subject.

* See ante, Vol. VII. p. 119.

"To Daniel Terry, Esq., Boulogne-sur-Mer.
"London, Lockhart's, April 15, 1828.

"My Dear Terry, - I received with sincere distress your most melancholy letter. Certainly want of candour with one's friends is blameable, and procrastination in circumstances of embarrassment is highly unwise. But they bring such a fearful chastisement on the party who commits them, that he may justly expect, not the reproaches, but the sympathy and compassion of his friends; at least of all such whose conscience charges them with errors of their own. For my part. I feel as little title, as God knows I have wish, to make any reflections on the matter, more than are connected with the most sincere regret on your own account. The sum at which I stand noted in the schedule is of no consequence in the now more favourable condition of my affairs, and the loss to me personally is the less, that I always considered £200 of the same as belonging to my godson; but he is young, and may not miss the loss when he comes to be fitted out for the voyage of life; we must hope the best. I told your solicitor that I desired he would consider me as a friend of yours, desirous to take as a creditor the measures which seemed best to forward your interest. It might be inconvenient to me were I called upon to make up such instalments of the price of the theatre as are unpaid; but of this, I suppose, there can be no great danger. Pray let me know as soon as you can, how this stands. I think you are quite right to stand to the worst, and that your retiring was an injudicious measure which cannot be too soon retraced, coute qui coute. I am at present in London with Lockhart, who, as well as my daughter, are in deep sorrow for what has happened, as they, as well as I on their account, consider themselves as deeply obliged to Mrs. Terry's kindness, as well as from regard to you. These hard times must seem still harder while you are in a foreign country. I am not, you know, so wealthy as I have been, but £20 or £30 are heartily at your service if you will let me know how the remittance can reach you. It does not seem to me that an

arrangement with your creditors will be difficult; but for God's sake do not temporize and undertake burdens which you cannot discharge, and which will only lead to new difficulties.

"As to your views about an engagement at Edinburgh I doubt much, though an occasional visit would probably succeed. My countrymen, taken in their general capacity, are not people to have recourse to in adverse circumstances. John Bull is a better beast in misfortune. Your objections to an American trip are quite satisfactory, unless the success of your solicitor's measures should in part remove them, when it may be considered as a pis-aller. As to Walter, there can be no difficulty in procuring his admission to the Edinburgh Academy, and if he could be settled with his grandfather, or under his eye, as to domestic accommodation, I would willingly take care of his schooling, and look after him when I am in town. I shall be anxious, indeed, till I hear that you are once more restored to the unrestrained use of your talents; for I am sensible how dreadfully annoying must be your present situation, which leaves so much time for melancholy retrospection without any opportunity of exertion. Yet this state, like others, must be endured with patience: the furiously impatient horse only plunges himself deeper in the slough, as our old hunting excursions may have taught us. In general, the human mind is strong in proportion to the internal energy which it possesses. Evil fortune is as transient as good, and if the endangered ship is still manned by a sturdy and willing crew, why then

'Up and rig a jury foremast,
She rights, she rights, boys! we're off shore.'*

This was the system I argued upon in my late distresses; and, therefore, I strongly recommend it to you. I beg my kindest compliments to Mrs. Terry, and I hope better days may come. I shall be here till the beginning of May; therefore we may meet; believe me very truly yours, Walter Scott."

^{*} Song by G. H. Stevens - Ccase rude Boreas, &c.

On the afternoon of the 28th of May, Sir Walter started for the north, but could not resist going out of his way to see the spot where "Mr. William Weare, who dwelt in Lyon's Inn," was murdered. His Diary says:—

"Our elegant researches carried us out of the highroad and through a labyrinth of intricate lanes, which seem made on purpose to afford strangers the full benefit of a dark night and a drunk driver, in order to visit Gill's Hill, in Hertfordshire, famous for the murder of Mr. Weare. The place has the strongest title to the description of Wordsworth —

'A merry spot, 'tis said, in days of yore; But something ails it now — the place is curst.'

The principal part of the house has been destroyed, and only the kitchen remains standing. The garden has been dismantled, though a few laurels and flowering-shrubs, run wild, continue to mark the spot. The fatal pond is now only a green swamp, but so near the house that one cannot conceive how it was ever chosen as a place of temporary concealment for the murdered body. Indeed the whole history of the murder, and the scenes which ensued, are strange pictures of desperate and short-sighted wickedness. The feasting - the singing - the murderer, with his hands still bloody, hanging round the neck of one of the females the watch-chain of the murdered man argue the utmost apathy. Even Probart, the most frightened of the party, fled no farther for relief than to the brandy bottle, and is found in the very lane, nay, at the very spot of the murder, seeking for the weapon, and exposing himself to the view of the passengers. Another singular mark of stupid audacity was their venturing to wear the clothes of their victim. There was a want of foresight in the whole arrangements of the deed, and the attempts to conceal it, which a professed robber would not have exhibited. There was just one shade of redeeming character about a business so brutal, perpetrated by men above the very lowest rank of life: it was the mixture

of revenge, which afforded some relief to the circumstances of treachery and premeditation. But Weare was a cheat,* and had no doubt pillaged Thurtell, who therefore deemed he might take greater liberties with him than with others. The dirt of the present habitation equalled its wretched desolation, and a truculent-looking hag, who showed us the place, and received half-a-crown, looked not unlike the natural inmate of such a mansion. She hinted as much herself, saving the landlord had dismantled the place, because no respectable person would live there. She seems to live entirely alone, and fears no ghosts, she says. One thing about this tragedy was never explained. It is said that Weare, as is the habit of such men, always carried about his person, and between his flannel waistcoat and shirt, a sum of ready money, equal to £1500 or £2000. No such money was ever recovered, and as the sum divided by Thurtell among his accomplices was only about £20, he must, in slang phrase, have bucketed his palls.

"May 29.—We travelled from Alconbury Hill to Ferry Bridge, upwards of a hundred miles, amid all the beauties of flourish and verdure which spring awakens at her first approach in the midland counties of England, but without any variety, save those of the season's making. I do believe this great north road is the dullest in the world, as well as the most convenient for the travellers. The skeleton at Barnby Moor has deserted his gibbet, and that is the only change I recollect.

"Rokeby, May 30. — We left Ferry Bridge at seven, and reached this place at past three. A mile from the house we met Morritt, looking for us. I had great pleasure in finding myself at Rokeby, and recollecting a hundred passages of past time. Morritt looks well and easy in his mind, which I am delighted to see. He is now one of my oldest, and, I believe, one of my most sincere friends; — a man unequalled in the

* Weare, Thurtell, and all the rest, were professed gamblers. See ante, p. 105.



mixture of sound good sense, high literary cultivation, and the kindest and sweetest temper that ever graced a human bosom. His nieces are much attached to him, and are deserving and elegant; as well as beautiful young women. What there is in our partiality to female beauty that commands a species of temperate homage from the aged, as well as ecstatic admiration from the young, I cannot conceive; but it is certain that a very large portion of some other amiable quality is too little to counterbalance the absolute want of this advantage. I. to whom beauty is, and shall henceforward be, a picture, still look upon it with the quiet devotion of an old worshipper, who no longer offers incense on the shrine, but peaceably presents his inch of taper, taking special care in doing so not to burn his own fingers. Nothing in life can be more ludicrous or contemptible than an old man aping the passions of his youth.

"Talking of youth, there was a certain professor at Cambridge, who used to keep sketches of all the lads who, from their conduct at college, seemed to bid fair for distinction in life. He showed them one day to an old shrewd sarcastic master of arts, who looked over the collection, and then observed—'A promising nest of eggs: what a pity the great part will turn out addle!' And so they do:—looking round amongst the young men, one sees to all appearances fine flourish—but it ripens not.

"May 31. — I have finished Napier's War in the Peninsula.* It is written in the spirit of a Liberal, but the narrative is distinct and clear. He has, however, given a bad sample of accuracy in the case of Lord Strangford, where his pointed affirmation has been as pointedly repelled. It is evident he would require probing. His defence of Moore is spirited and well argued, though it is evident he defends the statesman as much as the general. As a Liberal and a military man, Napier finds it difficult to steer his course. The

The first volume of Colonel Napier's work had recently been published.



former character calls on him to plead for the insurgent Spaniards; the latter induces him to palliate the cruelties of the French. Good-even to him until next volume, which I shall long to see. This was a day of pleasure, and nothing else."

Next night Sir Walter rested at Carlisle.

"A sad place," says the Diary, "in my domestic remembrances, since here I married my poor Charlotte. She is gone, and I am following — faster, perhaps, than I wot of. It is something to have lived and loved; and our poor children are so hopeful and affectionate, that it chastens the sadness attending the thoughts of our separation. . . . My books being finished, I lighted on an odd volume of the Gentleman's Magazine, a work in which, as in a pawnbroker's shop, much of real curiosity and value are stowed away amid the frippery and trumpery of those reverend old gentlewomen who were the regular correspondents of Mr. Urban."

His companion wrote thus a day or two afterwards to her sister:*—

"Early in the morning before we started, papa took me with him to the Cathedral. This he had often done before; but he said he must stand once more on the spot where he married poor mamma. After that we went to the Castle, where a new showman went through the old trick of pointing out Fergus MacIvor's very dungeon. Peveril said—'Indeed?— are you quite sure, sir?' And on being told there could be no doubt, was troubled with a fit of coughing, which ended in a laugh. The man seemed exceeding indignant: so when papa moved on, I whispered who it was. I wish you

* I copy from a letter which has no date, so that I cannot be quite sure of this being the halt at Carlisle it refers to. I once witnessed a scene almost exactly the same at Stirling Castle, where an old soldier called Sir Walter's attention to the "very dungeon" of Roderick Dhn.



had seen the man's start, and how he stared and bowed as he parted from us; and then rammed his keys into his pocket, and went off at a hand-gallop to warn the rest of the garrison. But the carriage was ready, and we escaped a row."

They reached Abbotsford that night, and a day or two afterwards Edinburgh; where Sir Walter was greeted with the satisfactory intelligence, that his plans as to the "opus magnum" had been considered at a meeting of his trustees, and finally approved in toto. As the scheme inferred a large outlay on drawings and engravings, and otherwise, this decision had been looked for with much anxiety by him and Mr. Cadell. He says - "I trust it will answer; yet who can warrant the continuance of popularity? Old Nattali Corri, who entered into many projects, and could never set the sails of a windmill to catch the aura popularis, used to say he believed that, were he to turn baker, it would put bread out of fashion. I have had the better luck to dress my sails to every wind; and so blow on, good wind, and spin round, whirligig." The Corri here alluded to was an unfortunate adventurer, who, among many other wild schemes, tried to set up an Italian Opera at Edinburgh.

The Diary for the next month records the usual meeting at Blair-Adam, but nothing worth quoting, that was done or said, except, perhaps, these two scraps—

[&]quot;Salutation of two old Scottish Lairds — 'Yere maist obedient hummil servant, Tannachy-Tulloch.' — 'Your nain man, Kilspindie.'

[&]quot;Hereditary descent in the Highlands. — A clergyman showed John Thomson the island of Inchmachome, on the Port of Monteith, and pointed out the boatman as a remarkable person, the representative of the hereditary gardeners of the Earls of Monteith, while these Earls existed. His son,

a puggish boy, follows up the theme — 'Feyther, when Donald MacCorkindale dees, will not the family be extinct?'—
Father — 'No; I believe there is a man in Balquhidder who takes up the succession.'"

During the remainder of this year, as I already mentioned, Sir Walter never opened his "locked book." Whether in Edinburgh or the country, his life was such, that he describes himself, in several letters, as having become "a writing automaton." He had completed, by Christmas, the Second Series of Tales on Scottish History, and made considerable progress in another novel—Anne of Geierstein: he had also drawn up for the Quarterly Review his article on Mr. Morier's Hajji Baba in England; and that delightful one on Sir Humphry Davy's Salmonia—which, like those on Planting and Gardening, abounds in sweet episodes of personal reminiscence: And, whenever he had not proof-sheets to press him, his hours were bestowed on the opus magnum.

A few extracts from his correspondence may supply in part this blank in the Diary. Several of them touch on the affairs of Mr. Terry, whose stamina were not sufficient to resist the stroke of misfortune. He had a paralytic seizure, very shortly after the ruin of his theatre was made public. One, addressed to a dear and early friend, Sir Alexander Wood, was written on the death of his brother-in-law, Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo — the same modest, gentle, and high-spirited man with whose history Sir Walter's had (as the Diary of 1826 tells) been very remarkably intertwined.

" To John Lockhart, Esq., Regent's Park.

"Abbotsford, July 14, 1828.

"My Dear L.—I wrote myself blind and sick last week about * * * * * * † God forgive me for having thought it possible that a schoolmaster should be out and out a rational being. I have a letter from Terry — but written by his poor wife — his former one was sadly scrawled. I hope he may yet get better — but I suspect the shot has gone near the heart.

'O what a world of worlds were it,
Would sorrow, pain, and sickness spare it,
And aye a rowth roast-beef and claret;
Syne wha would starve?'

"If it be true that Longman and Co. have offered £1000 for a history of Ireland, Scotland must stand at fifty per cent. discount, for they lately offered me £500 for one of the latter country, which of course I declined. I have also had Murray's request so do some biography for his new undertaking. But I really can't think of any Life I could easily do, excepting Queen Mary's; and that I decidedly would not do, because my opinion, in point of fact, is contrary both to the popular feeling and to my own. I see, by the by, that your Life of Burns is going to press again, and therefore send you a few letters which may be of use to you. In one of them (to that singular old curmudgeon, Lady Winifred Constable) you will see he plays high Jacobite, and, on that account, it is curious; though I imagine his Jacobitism, like my own, belonged to the fancy rather than the reason. He was, however, a great Pittite down to a certain period. There were some passing stupid verses in the papers, attacking and defending his satire

[†] These letters, chiefly addressed to Sir Walter's excellent friend, James Heywood Markland, Esq. (Editor of the Chester Mysteries), were on a delicate subject connected with the incipient arrangements of King's College, London.

[†] Mr. Murray of Albemarle Street was at this time projecting his Family Library, one of the many imitations of Constable's last scheme.

on a certain preacher, whom he termed 'an unco calf.' In one of them occurred these lines in vituperation of the adversary —

'A Whig, I guess. But Rab's a Tory, An gies us mony a funny story.'

"This was in 1787. — Ever yours,

" WALTER SCOTT."

" To Robert Cadell, Esq., Edinburgh.

"Abbotsford, 4th October 1828.

"My Dear Sir, — We were equally gratified and surprised by the arrival of the superb time-piece with which you have ornamented our halls. There are grand discussions where it is to be put, and we are only agreed upon one point, that it is one of the handsomest things of the kind we ever saw, and that we are under great obligations to the kind donor. On my part, I shall never look on it without recollecting that the employment of my time is a matter of consequence to you, as well as myself.*

"I send you two letters, of which copies will be requisite for the magnum opus. They must be copied separately. I wish you would learn from Mr. Walter Dickson, with my best respects, the maiden name of Mrs. Goldie, and the proper way in which she ought to be designated. Another point of information I wish to have is, concerning the establishment of the King's beadsmen or blue-gowns. Such should occur in any account of the Chapel-Royal, to which they were an appendage, but I have looked into Arnott and Maitland, without being able to find anything. My friend Dr. Lee will know at once where this is to be sought for.

"Here is a question. Burns in his poetry repeatedly states the idea of his becoming a beggar—these passages I have. But there is a remarkable one in some of his prose, stating

* The allusion is to a clock in the style of Louis Quatorze, now in the drawing-room at Abbotsford.

with much spirit the qualifications he possessed for the character. I have looked till I am sick, through all the letters of his which I have seen, and cannot find this. Do you know any amateur of the Ayrshire Bard who can point it out? It will save time, which is precious to me.*

"J. B. has given me such a dash of criticism, that I have laid by the Maid of the Mist for a few days. But I am working hard, meanwhile, at the illustrations; so no time is lost.—Yours very truly,

WALTER SCOTT."

" To Mrs. Lockhart, Brighton.

"Abbotsford, 24th October 1828.

"My Dear Sophia, - I write to you rather than to the poor Terrys, on the subject of their plans, which appear to me to require reconsideration, as I have not leisure so to modify my expressions as to avoid grating upon feelings which may be sore enough already. But if I advise, I must be plain. The plan of a cottage in this neighbourhood is quite visionary. London or its vicinity is the best place for a limited income. because you can get everything you want without taking a pennyweight more of it than you have occasion for. In the country (with us at least) if you want a basin of milk every day, you must keep a cow - if you want a bunch of straw, you must have a farm. But what is still worse, it seems to me that such a plan would remove Terry out of his natural sphere of action. It is no easy matter, at any rate, to retreat from the practice of an art to the investigation of its theory; but common sense says, that if there is one branch of literature which has a chance of success for our friend, it must be that relating to the drama. Dramatic works, whether designed for the stage or the closet, - dramatic biography (an article in which the public is always interested) - dramatic criticism - these can all be conducted with best advantage in

* These queries all point to the annotation of The Antiquary.



London, - or, rather, they can be conducted nowhere else. In coming down to Scotland, therefore, Terry would be leaving a position in which, should he prove able to exert himself and find the public favourable, he might possibly do as much for his family as he could by his profession. But then he will . require to be in book-shops and publishing-houses, and living among those up to the current of public opinion. And although poor Terry's spirits might not at first be up to this exertion. he should remember that the power of doing things easily is only to be acquired by resolution and habit, and if he really could give heart and mind to literature in any considerable degree, I can't see how, amidst so many Bijoux, and Albums, and Souvenirs - not to mention daily papers, critics, censors, and so forth - I cannot see how he could fail to make £200 or £300 a-year. In Edinburgh there is nothing of this kind going forwards, positively nothing. Since Constable's fall, all exertion is ended in the Gude Town in the publishing business, excepting what I may not long be able to carry on.

"We have had little Walter Terry with us. He is a nice boy. I have got him sent to the New Academy in Edinburgh, and hope he will do well. Indeed, I have good hopes as to them all; but the prospect of success must remain, first, with the restoration of Terry to the power of thought and labour, a matter which is in God's hand; and, secondly, on the choice he shall make of a new sphere of occupation. On these events no mortal can have influence, unless so far as Mrs. Terry may be able to exert over him that degree of power which mind certainly possesses over body.

"Our worthy old aunt, Lady Raeburn, is gone, and I am now the eldest living person of my father's family. My old friend, Sir William Forbes, is extremely ill, — dying, I fear; and the winter seems to approach with more than usual gloom. We are well here, however, and send love to Lockhart and the babies. I want to see L. much, and hope he may make a run down at Christmas.

"You will take notice, that all the advice I venture to of-

fer to the Terrys is according as matters now stand.* Indeed, I think he is better now than when struggling against a losing concern, turning worse every day. With health I have little doubt he may do well yet, and without it what can any one do? Poor Rose,—he too seems to be very badly; and so end, if I lose him, wit, talent, frolic beyond the bounds of sobriety, all united with an admirable heart and feelings.

"Besides all other objections to Terry's plan, the poor invalid would be most uncomfortable here. As my guest, it was another thing; but without power to entertain the better sort of folk, and liable from his profession to the prejudices of our middling people, without means too of moving about, he must, while we are not at Abbotsford, be an absolute hermit. Besides, health may be restored so as to let him act again—regimen and quiet living do much in such cases—and he should not rashly throw up professional connexions. If they be bent on settling in Scotland, a small house in Edinburgh would be much better than the idea of residing here.

"I have been delighted with your views of coming back to Chiefswood next summer. - but had you not better defer that for another year? Here is plenty of room for you all plenty of beef and mutton - plenty of books for L., and he should have the little parlour (the monkey-room, as Morritt has christened it) inviolate - and he and I move on easily without interrupting each other. Pray think of all this, and believe that, separated as I am so much from you both and the grandchildren, the more I can see of you all while I have eyes left to see you with, the greater will be my pleasure. I am turning a terrible fixture with rheumatism, and go about little but in the carriage, and round the doors. A change of market-days, - but seams will slit, and elbows will out. My general health is excellent. - I am always, dearest Sophia, WALTER SCOTT." your affectionate father,

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^{*} Mr. Terry died in London on the 22d June 1829. His widow, to whom these Memoirs have owed many of their materials, is now (1837) married to Mr. Charles Richardson of Tulse Hill, the author of the well-known Dictionary of the English Language, &c.

"To Sir Alexander Wood, &c. &c., Colinton House, Edinburgh.

" Abbotsford, Oct. 28, 1828.

"My Dear Sir Alexander, - Your letter brought me the afflicting intelligence of the death of our early and beloved friend Sir William. I had little else to expect, from the state of health in which he was when I last saw him, but that circumstance does not diminish the pain with which I now reflect that I shall never see him more. He was a man who, from his habits, could not be intimately known to many, although ' everything which he did partook of that high feeling and generosity which belongs perhaps to a better age than that we live in. In him I feel I have sustained a loss which no after years of my life can fill up to me. Our early friendship none knew better than you; and you also well know that if I look back to the gav and happy hours of youth, they must be filled with recollections of our departed friend. In the whole course of life our friendship has been uninterrupted as his kindness has been unwearied. Even the last time I saw him (so changed from what I knew him) he came to town when he was fitter to have kept his room, merely because he could be of service to some affairs of mine. It is most melancholy to reflect that the life of a man whose principles were so excellent, and his heart so affectionate, should have, in the midst of external prosperity, been darkened, and I fear I may say shortened, by domestic affliction. But 'those whom He loveth, he chasteneth: '* and the o'er-seeing Providence, whose ways are as just and kind as they are inscrutable, has given us, in the fate of our dear friend, an example that we must look to a better world for the reward of sound religion, active patriotism, and extended benevolence. I need not write more to you on this subject; you must feel the loss more keenly than any one. But there is another and a better world, in which, I trust in God, those who have loved each

* Hebrews, xii. 6.

other in this transitory scene, may meet and recognise the friends of youth, and companions of more advanced years.

"I beg my kindest compliments and sincere expressions of sympathy to Lady Wood, and to any of the sorrowing family who may be gratified by the interest of one of their father's oldest friends and most afflicted survivors.

"God bless you, my dear Wood! and I am sure you will believe me, yours in sorrow as in gladness,

"WALTER SCOTT."

" To J. G. Lockhart, Esq., Brighton.

"October 80, 1828.

"Dear John, — I have a sad affliction in the death of poor Sir William Forbes. You loved him well, I know, but it is impossible that you should enter into all my feelings on this occasion. My heart bleeds for his children. God help all!

"Your scruples about doing an epitome of the Life of Boney, for the Family Library that is to be, are a great deal over delicate. My book in nine thick volumes can never fill the place which our friend Murray wants you to fill, and which, if you don't, some one else will, right soon. Moreover, you took much pains in helping me when I was beginning my task, which I afterwards greatly regretted that Constable had no means of remunerating, as no doubt he intended, when you were giving him so much good advice in laying down his grand plans about the Miscellany. By all means do what the Emperor asks. He is what Emperor Nap. was not, much a gentleman, and, knowing our footing in all things, would not have proposed anything that ought to have excited scruples on your side. Alas, poor Crafty! Do you remember his exultation when my Boney affair was first proposed? Good God! I see him as he then was at this moment - how he swelled and rolled and reddened, and outblarneyed all blarney! Well, so be it. I hope

'After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.' *

* Macbeth.



But he has cost me many a toilsome dreary day, and drearier night, and will cost me more yet.

"I am getting very unlocomotive --- something like an old cabinet that looks well enough in its own corner, but will scarce bear wheeling about even to be dusted. But my work has been advancing gaily, or at least rapidly, nevertheless, all Master Littlejohn will soon have three more this harvest. tomes in his hand, and the Swiss story too will be ready early in the year. I shall send you Vol. I. with wee Johnnie's affair. Fat James, as usual, has bored and bothered me with his criticisms, many of which, however, may have turned to good. At first my not having been in Switzerland was a devil of a poser for him - but had I not the honour of an intimate personal acquaintance with every pass in the Highlands; and if that were not enough, had I not seen pictures and prints galore? I told him I supposed he was becoming a geologist, and afraid of my misrepresenting the strata of some rock on which I had to perch my Maid of the Mist, but that he should be too good a Christian to join those humbugging sages, confound them, who are all tarred with the same stick as Mr. Whiston -

> 'Who proved as sure as God's in Glo'ster, That Moses was a grand impostor;' *

and that at any rate I had no mind to rival the accuracy of the traveller, I forget who, that begins his chapter on Athens with a disquisition on the formation of the Acropolis Rock. Mademoiselle de Geierstein, is now, however, in a fair way — I mean of being married and a' the lave o't, and I of having her ladyship off my hands. I have also twined off a world of not bad balaam in the way of notes, &c. for my Magnum, which if we could but manage the artists decently, might soon be afloat, and will, I do think, do wonders for my extrication. I have no other news to trouble you with. It is possible the Quarterly may be quite right to take the Anti-Catholic line so strongly; but I greatly doubt the prudence of the thing, for I am convinced the question must and will be carried very

• Swift.

soon, whoever may or may not be Minister; and as to the Duke of Wellington, my faith is constant, that there is no other man living who can work out the salvation of this country. I take some credit to myself for having foreseen his greatness, before many would believe him to be anything out of the ordinary line of clever officers. He is such a man as Europe has not seen since Julius Cæsar; and if Spain had had the brains to make him king, that country might have been one of the first of the world before his death. — Ever affectionately yours,

Of the same date was the following letter, addressed to the projector of a work, entitled, "The Courser's Manual." He had asked Sir Walter for a contribution; and received the ancient Scottish ditty of "Auld Heck:"—

- "Dear Sir, I have loved the sport of coursing so well, and pursued it so keenly for several years, that I would with pleasure have done anything in my power to add to your collection on the subject; but I have long laid aside the amusement, and still longer renounced the poetical pen, which ought to have celebrated it; and I could only send you the laments of an old man, and the enumeration of the number of horses and dogs which have been long laid under the sod. I cannot, indeed, complain with the old huntsman, that —
- * This work, though ultimately published under the name of another editor, was projected and arranged by the late Rev. Mr. Barnard of Brantinghamthorpe in Yorkshire; whose undertaking had no doubt been introduced to Sir Walter's notice by his father-in-law, Mr. Archdeacon Wrangham. That elegant scholar had visited Abbotsford with some of his family about this period. He has since embalmed in pathetic verse the memory of Barnard, whose skill in rural sports by no means interfered with his graceful devotion to literature, or his pious assiduity in the labours of his profession. The reader will find his virtues and accomplishments affectionately recorded in the learned and interesting preface (p. 30) to a Translation of Arrian's Cynegeticus, "by a Graduate of Medicine:" London, quarto, 1831.

'---- No one now,
Dwells in the hall of Ivor;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead,
And I the sole survivor; '*

but I have exchanged my whip for a walking-stick, my smart hack has dwindled into a Zetland shelty, and my two brace of greyhounds into a pair of terriers. Instead of entering on such melancholy topics, I judge it better to send you an Elegy on 'Bonny Heck,' an old Scottish poem, of very considerable merit in the eyes of those who understand the dialect.

"The elegy itself turns upon a circumstance which, when I kept greyhounds, I felt a considerable alloy to the sport; I mean, the necessity of despatching the instruments and partakers of our amusement, when they begin to make up, by cunning, for the deficiency of youthful vigour. A greyhound is often termed an inferior species of the canine race, in point of sagacity; and in the eyes of an accomplished sportsman it is desirable they should be so, since they are valued for their spirit, not their address. Accordingly, they are seldom admitted to the rank of personal favourites. I have had such greyhounds, however, and they possessed as large a share of intelligence, attachment, and sagacity, as any other species of dog that I ever saw. In such cases, it becomes difficult or impossible to execute the doom upon the antiquated greyhound, so coolly recommended by Dame Juliana Berners:—

'And when he comes to that yere, Have him to the tannere, For the best whelp ever bitch had At nine years is full bad.'

Modern sportsmen anticipate the doom by three years at least.

"I cannot help adding to the 'Last Words of Bonny Heck,' a sporting anecdote, said to have happened in Fife, and not far from the residence of that famous greyhound, which may serve to show in what regard the rules of fair play between

* Wordsworth.

hound and hare are held by Scottish sportsmen. There was a coursing club, once upon a time, which met at Balchristy, in the Province, or, as it is popularly called, the Kingdom of Fife. The members were elderly social men, to whom a very moderate allowance of sport served as an introduction to a hearty dinner and jolly evening. Now, there had her seat on the ground where they usually met, a certain large stout hare, who seemed made on purpose to entertain these moderate sportsmen. usually gave the amusement of three or four turns, as soon as she was put up, - a sure sign of a strong hare, when practised by any beyond the age of a leveret; then stretched out in great style, and after affording the gentlemen an easy canter of a mile or two, threw out the dogs by passing through a particular gap in an inclosure. This sport the same hare gave to the same party for one or two seasons, and it was just enough to afford the worthy members of the club a sufficient reason to be alleged to their wives, or others whom it might concern, for passing the day in the public-house. At length, a fellow who attended the hunt nefariously thrust his plaid, or great-coat, into the gap I mentioned, and poor puss, her retreat being thus cut off, was, in the language of the dying Desdemona, 'basely - basely murdered.' The sport of the Balchristy club seemed to end with this famous hare. They either found no hares, or such as afforded only a halloo and a squeak, or such, finally, as gave them farther runs than they had pleassure in following. The spirit of the meeting died away, and at length it was altogether given up.

"The publican was, of course, the party most especially affected by the discontinuance of the club, and regarded, it may be supposed, with no complacency, the person who had prevented the hare from escaping, and even his memory. One day, a gentleman asked him what was become of such a one, naming the obnoxious individual. 'He is dead, sir,' answered mine host, with an angry scowl, 'and his soul kens this day whether the hare of Balchristy got fair play or not.'

" WALTER SCOTT."



Resuming his journal at the close of the year, he says —

"Having omitted to carry on my Diary for two or three days, I lost heart to make it up, and left it unfilled for many a month and day. During this period nothing has happened worth particular notice:— the same occupations,— the same amusements,— the same occasional alternations of spirits, gay or depressed,— the same absence, for the most part, of all sensible or rational cause for the one or the other. I half grieve to take up my pen, and doubt if it is worth my while to record such an infinite quantity of nothing."

END OF VOL. VIII.

Boston, 135 Washington Stram, May, 1862.

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